

《易经》的易象 意蕴 行动指南

画说 易经

[西班牙] 科斯娜·白特兰 著

Cristina Bertrand

张文智 译

上海文艺出版社

Image, Concept and Action

YIJING

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1998

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Image, Concept and Action



蘇州大學
圖書館
PDG

谨以此书献给
中国人民
以及
所有
希望学习中国古代智慧明珠
《易经》的读者





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子曰：“加我数年，五十以学《易》，可以无大过矣。”

——《论语·述而》



很久很久以前，有一位学者钻到山的最深处，试图发现智慧。他看到日出、日落，搜集到各种知识，并与世界上最著名的人交谈，但他最终没有找到智慧。他的时间快要结束了，他不得不回家了。在他的家门口，有人留有一张字条：

如果你没有
耐心，
就不要问。
如果你有耐心
但缺乏勇气，
你就只会处于路的
半途。
如果你既有耐心又有
勇气，
你将会找到内心的平和。

现在，去吧
并把你的平和
送给你人生中
所发现的
第一个人。

本书成书的历史渊源与背景

1. 本书作者对《易经》内容的理解与介绍

撰写本书所面临的挑战是，让一般读者也能接近古老的《易经》所蕴含的深邃道理。本书基于我在马德里康普腾斯大学（Complutense University）完成的博士论文——《自然的意义——中西思想合璧及其在风景画中的表现》。

在哲学领域进行学术研究时，我对中国历史和中华文明产生了兴趣。我综合学习了孔子、老子和其他中国哲学家的著作，而在他们的作品中多次提到了《易经》。这激励我开始对《易经》进行深入的研究。在读《易经》时，我发现许多儒家和道家的概念都源于《易经》，而反过来，孔子、老子及其众门徒也以他们的知识与思想丰富了《易经》。因此，《易经》可以说是历朝历代前人智慧的积累与结晶。

对《易经》集成哲学的迷人发现、研究其结构系统的挑战以及将其理解为道德指南的重要性，使我决定将《易经》作为博士论文的主题。而且，作为一个画家，我认为我可以为《易经》添加另一个维度——美学成分——它可以帮助读者领悟《易经》中所蕴涵的智慧。

本书是根据《易经》之易象（六十四卦卦符）和意蕴来安排的，从中提炼出其精义，每一卦都伴有根据易象及其意蕴所作的一首小诗和表现其意境的一幅图画。为便于用本书解答疑问，每一卦的副标题标示出理解该卦内容的线索。每卦皆以与自然之象（如该卦所伴之图画）相关的一段文字开始，接下来是解释易象背后之意蕴的一段文字。最后一段则是对行动的总体指导。图画有利于将意蕴与易象融为一体，从而深刻地表达出我心目中《易经》所包含的根本智慧。

本书中的图画所代表的风景皆源自西班牙的不同地区，但它们又属于所有国家，而且其意象也具有普遍性。它们是《易经》卦象意义的一种个人表达。有些图画描绘了三画卦和六画卦的最根本的卦象（天、地、山、泽等）。而其他的图画则是通过运用颜色或物象（红色的岩石象征火，森林象征风，暴风雨中的山峰象征雷）而得出的。针对每一种情况，我选择了我认为能最好地表达《易经》之意蕴并有助于人们理解的风景。

2. 本书的绘画风格——作为认知之道的表现主义

本书所绘图画是表现主义的风景画。这些图画是经过对《易经》每一卦进行综合分析后而画的，通过寻找自然风景以发现最能表现各卦卦象与意义的风景。表现主义的核心观念是表现对象的内在本质，而且艺术家越明了该事物，就越能更好地在其艺术作品中表现该对象。表现主义与印象主义相反，印象主义描绘主体——在此指风景——留给观察者的外部印象。表现主义画家努力从深层理解要表现的主体，从而向观画者揭示最深处的真实。在研究主体的过程中，艺术家本身也会加深对真实的理解。

因为表现主义画家关注的是表现主体的内在真实而不是其外在表现，所以他的画中的对象是根据对象的意义而不只是根据美学的经典规则来安排的。创作和颜色并不总是遵循经典美学的限定。表现主义画家可以知道怎样把人物置于画布的中心，但如果他认为人物的脸是最重要的部分，脸就会在绘画中处于突出地位，而其他因素就会退居次要地位甚至消失于画布边缘之外。颜色也是以同样的方法进行处理。颜色不是被视为绘画对象线条的反映，而是用作描绘试图达致表面的该对象的内在“生命”。表现主义艺术家在创作时允许自己在颜色和形式运用方面有充分的自由。

我这些曾在画布上表现的风景，对我体悟自然和欣赏《易经》产生了深刻的影响。它们除了可提供美的享受之外，还成为一种认识和获得知识的途径。对我来说，我所绘的画与《易经》是密不可分的。



《易经》中的智慧与道德

1. 作为智慧之书的《易经》——易象与意蕴

在对《易经》进行介绍时，著名《易经》学者卫礼贤（Richard Wilhelm）先生——将《易经》译为德文的第一人——指出：《易经》是世界文献中最重要的典籍之一。

《易经》首先是用于占筮。但其占筮功能对那些寻求人生建议的人来说并非特别有用，因为那样他们就必须被动等待所占事件的展开。中国的圣人寻找到一条将作为卜筮之书的《易经》转化为智慧之书的途径，这样人们就能够在需要指导时进行咨询。他们知道这种智慧是积极的而且处境可以根据意愿进行调整，所以他们便决定学习自然法则，以便发现这些法则的意义并将这些知识添加到《易经》的内容中去。

《易经》是一部智慧之书，人们可以在一种简单的水平上阅读《易经》以增长自然法则方面的知识。更为深入的学习可以揭示存在于自然物象间的更深层的意义。《易经》通过自然之道教给我们的是掌握个体命运的法则。最后，《易经》提供的是通过选择正道而获得成功所必不可少的道德指导。

《易经》分为六十四篇，每一篇皆以一个六画卦开始。每个六画卦由两个三画卦组成，而三画卦组成的八卦与自然之物（天、地、山、泽等）相配应。每卦还包涵该卦卦象之意蕴。此意蕴是对内在自然法则的解释，因此可以作为顺应自然法则的、正确的、适时的及合乎道德的行为指导而产生作用。六十四卦从整体上反映了发生在天、地、人间的所有变化。

《易经》揭示了将要在外部世界中展示自我的事件之象——但在这一事件仍可进行调整的关键点上。这一具有无限变化之可能的关键点是明了过去、现在和未来的钥匙，并向人们提供调整行为的工具以获得理想的结果。其基本理论是，人类世界的每一事物的表现皆首先作为一种理念出现，该理念已通过顺应一定法则变为真实。其结果是，如果能够将可见的事物之表现与理念及法则世界联系起来，人们就可以预见其行为的结果，并选择适当的行动方式来改变其处境。

通过描绘自然风景及其变化，《易经》告诉我们的是，我们必须一直把人看作自然的

一部分。人与自然之间的平衡决定了整体的和谐。在《易经》的每一篇章中，自然现象皆被表达得十分清晰明了，因此它们所给予的启示易于令人吸取和接受。

2. 作为道德之书的《易经》——德行

占卜或算命缺乏道德价值，因为它没有对等待所占之事展开的人们提出行为要求。但《易经》是一部德行之书。《易经》作者不仅提供行为指导，而且指出符合道德的正确的道路，从而使人们获得理想的结果。《易经》指出，不道德的行为永远不会带来持久与成功之果。这是《易经》所深蕴的价值所在。

《易经》通过把象与意相结合，揭示了理念世界与人类世界之间的联系。通过观象，我们就可以理解寓于其中的使我们选择正确道路的意蕴。这就是为什么《易经》主要是一部道德之书的原因。其最终目的就是帮助人类通过道德的行动来发现生命中的通泰、和谐之境。



《易经》的起源与内部结构

《易经》的起源与作者

《易经》是一部关于“变化”的“经典”。“易”这个字有许多意思，其中包括“变”或“化”、“简易”以及“恒久”之意。同一个字即有“恒久”之意又有“变化”之意似乎是一种悖论，但《易经》所揭示的是，“变”实际上乃是事物惟一恒久不变的性质，即生命处于不断的变化之中，人类必须能够适变、应变才行。“经”意为“经典”，指儒家经典。儒家经典是一套因其在德教中之重要性而被提升为正典的书。

《易经》或古经是《周易》的第一部分，包括六十四卦卦符及卦爻辞。后来，又加上了被认为是孔子及其弟子所作的《易传》或《十翼》。因此，《周易》由两部分组成：《易经》与《易传》。至西汉时期《周易》被尊为众经之首之后，《周易》的经、传皆被提升到“经”的地位，《易经》也就成为《周易》的代名词而包含古经与《易传》两部分了。我们这里所说的《易经》即包括经、传两部分。

在汉语文献中，四位圣人被称为《易经》的作者：伏羲——八卦的创始人，文王——将八卦重为六十四卦并为每卦系以卦辞之人，文王的儿子周公——将每一爻系以爻辞之人，孔子及其弟子——为易象与彖辞作传之人。

传统认为，《易经》最早的起源可追溯至公元前2852-前2738年。人们将八卦的制作归功于伏羲，他被誉为中国文明之父。据说他发明了音乐，并教给人们许多技艺如用网捕鱼、养蚕和驯服野兽等。据传，伏羲发现一头龙马从黄河中浮现，并根据此神话般的动物背上的图案制作了八卦。代表天的龙与代表地的马的合一在中国文化中至为重要。

在商代（公元前1751-前1111年），占卜得到广泛应用。王公贵族将占卜作为其行政的组成部分，在作出重大决策之前，他们都要从占卜中寻求指导。当时只有国王（商代人称国王为“帝”）才有对占卜结果进行解释的权利，这就使国王成为沟通天人的媒介，从而增强了其君权天授的权威性。当时最普遍的法是观察经过灼烧后的兽骨上的兆纹。这些兆纹可能是《易经》卦爻符号的前身。

商朝的最后一个国王帝辛（纣王）是一个暴君。他的一名叫姬昌的大臣是其邦国——

周——的国王（西伯王）。姬昌在道德和行为上都是人们的典范。商纣王嫉恨西伯王的成功，便将他囚禁在一个叫羑里的地方。据传，在这七年的牢狱生活中，姬昌对伏羲所传八卦进行了深入的思考，并把八卦重为六十四卦。姬昌出狱并去世后，被他的儿子——周朝的第一个国王武王谥为文王——文明之王。文王的另一个儿子——周公又为六十四卦的每一爻系上爻辞。他们对道德、仁义的阐扬受到历代儒者的尊敬。

西周末期（约公元前770年），国王失去其重要地位，诸侯国国王获得更多的权利。这时《易经》开始被视为道德之书，并常常作为行为典范和正义被引用。

春秋时期（公元前770—前476年），中国哲学与道德史上出现了两位重要人物——老子（约公元前6世纪）和孔子（约公元前551—前479年）。在其著名的《道德经》一书中，老子提到了阴阳，证明老子曾受到《易经》的影响。在孔子弟子所辑孔子语录而成的《论语》中，有几句也说到《易经》，本书一开始所引“子曰”的那句话，就是其中的一句。

在后来的历朝历代中，《易经》受到皇帝的无上尊崇，甚至避过了秦始皇的焚书之祸。从公元前213年始，除丞相李斯之法家之书得以保留以外，其他诸子百家之书均被列为焚烧的对象。《易经》因为是卜筮和行为指导之书而躲过此祸。

到了清代（1644年—1911年），《易经》以《周易折中》之名作为皇家版本正式出版。此版本被用作大多数西方译本的中文底本，其中被卫礼贤（Richard Wilhelm）译成的德文本，又由贝恩斯（Cary F. Baynes）转译成英文本，就是以《周易折中》为底本的。而卫礼贤和贝恩斯的译本又是我学习《易经》的主要来源。

阴阳爻的产生与演化

在中国古代，当一个人的命运不顺利时，便会向卜筮者提出问题以占卜未来之吉凶，卜筮者运用一定的手段（多根据兽骨或龟骨上的兆纹）并回答“可以”或“不可以”。所划的阴阳爻有其自然的极性——幽明、昼夜、冷热、高低等等。圣人设定用——代表阳，用——代表阴。如果此人在占卜中遇到的兆纹是阳（——），对他的问题的回答就是“可以”；如果是阴（——），其答案则是“不可以”。

圣人发现对较麻烦的问题的回答应该比“可以”或“不可以”更复杂。事物总是能够

向其反面转化（白天可以变为黑夜，反之亦然），因此，阳爻（——）也可以变为阴爻（--）。

阴阳两极被视为天地及其上下关系的象征。由于生命是不断变化的，而且对一个问题 的回答有两种可能，圣人便将阴阳爻相重以形成四象，每一象由两爻组成。第一个上下皆为阳爻称为“老阳”，意味着完全“可以”；第二个下阴上阳，称为“少阳”，意味着“不可以/可以”，而更倾向于“不可以”；第三个上下皆阴，称为“老阴”，意味着完全“不可以”；最后一个 是下阳上阴，称为“少阴”，意味着“可以/不可以”，而更倾向于“可以”。图示如下：











而自然和人文的情状比两爻相合所表现的内容要更为复杂。在对自然现象之周期进行体验的同时，圣人们观察到有的现象具有一定的内在稳定性，变化很慢，而其他现象则很不稳定，很快就会分解。从这些观察中，他们总结到，每一爻（现象、情势）可以是稳定或不稳定的。因此，阳爻（——）可以是稳定的或不稳定的，这取决于其所处的情势和时间；反过来，阴爻（--）也同样是稳定的或不稳定的。即是说，阳爻（——）可以变为阴爻（--），反之亦然。

八卦与六十四卦



如前所述，《易经》的每一篇皆冠以一个六画卦。六画别卦由两个三画经卦组成。圣人是如何由前述之两画卦发展出三画卦的呢？





通过上观天、下察地，圣人发现了连接天地的人。有此发现之后，圣人在代表天地之两画卦之间又加上一画代表人，如此就形成了三画卦。三个阴（--）阳（——）之画相互组合，八卦便产生了。《易经》的作者以象征的形式将八卦与组成家庭的八个成员相

配属，每一成员又与其自然因素及人文属性相联系。如下：

卦 符	家庭关系	卦 名	属 性
	父	乾（天，创造性的）	创造力、刚健、恒久
	母	坤（地，接受性的）	接受性、专一、持久
	长男	震（雷，躁动）	动健、躁动、力量
	中男	坎（水，深处）	玄冥、险陷、灵活
	少男	艮（山，静止）	静止、平静、笃实
	长女	巽（风，柔和，木，穿透）	柔和、影响、渐进
	中女	离（火，附物之物）	明亮、透射、附着
	少女	兑（湖泽，宁静）	喜悦、安祥、柔和

通过继续对自然现象及自然现象间的相互作用进行观察，圣人注意到有的物象有时在下位——如湖中的水——有时在上位——如云中所涵的水。水从云中降落为雨时，其所处位置就会有所变换。火山中的火也是一样。火山之山在其内蕴的火之上，但当火山爆发时，火就上升于山之上。在这两种情形下，水与火自身的位置因其所处时段不同而不同。

八卦上下相重而成六十四卦。例如，上坎（）下震（）相重便形成屯卦

（）。而如果上震（）下坎（）相重，则会得到解卦（）。

《易经》六十四卦囊括了天、地、人之间的各种变化，而且所有这些内部、外部之变化被组织成一个内在统一的智慧系统，这一系统可以作为人们行为的指南。

看似矛盾而实有道理的是，易理一直恒常不断，形成了一条贯穿某种由必定相互遵循的逻辑法则组成的体系。

咨询《易经》以指导日常生活

1. 《易经》的咨询功能

《易经》的智慧和道德指导功能可以通过阅读《易经》文本获得。《易经》还可用于咨询以获得对具体问题的指导。作为一部具有普遍性智慧的经典，只要我们根据《易经》结构所确定的规则去做，它就会一直给予我们恰当的回答。

要把《易经》作为针对具体问题的行动指导，我们的问题必须与《易经》所确立的阴阳转化系统相合才行。《易经》只对包含两种选择的问题进行回答，每种选择需要采取一种不相同的行动。在咨询《易经》以获得指导时，重要的是要从我们所面临的两种可能或道路中选择其一作为咨询的对象。《易经》会对具体的问题作出具体的回答。如果我们运用正确并遵循这一原则，《易经》总是会指向正确的道路。

2. 正确地提出问题

比如，假设我们正面对这样一个难以作决定的问题：离开家乡去外国接受一份有诱惑力的工作。我们不能这样占问：“我应该留在自己的国家还是接受外国的工作？”如果这样占问，《易经》就无法给出答案。要锁定两种可能中的一种来进行占问：“我是否应该接受外国的工作？”或“我是否应该留在国内？”《易经》就可以提供答案。

3. 《易经》对所问问题的回答

《易经》对我们所锁定问题的回答比简单的“可以”或“不可以”要完备得多。首先，《易经》会告诉我们想要达到的目标对我们是否有利；其次，《易经》会为我们完成目标指出正确的道路；最后，如果在获得成功之果的道路上存在障碍，《易经》会对怎样排除或削弱障碍以获得成功提出建议。

譬如，《易经》可能会建议我们决然而行，因为获得成功的机会正当其时；或者相

反，它会告诫我们，目前我们缺乏承受具体行动所需要的忍耐，因此，不首先积蓄力量而采取这样的行动是不明智的。不管是哪种情况，通过阐明每一可预测的事件的结果，《易经》都会让我们明了在进行某一行动之前所要采取的步骤。尽管已预测到会有困难，如果我们执意要采取行动，《易经》还会向我们指明如何行动才能如愿。

《易经》对我们所问问题的惊人的正确回答并不神秘，因为这些回答是客观的并且是因果律的确切反映，因而我们的行动才会产生可能的结果。为了更好地理解《易经》是如何清楚地指明我们据以选择正确道路的处境，我运用了“拼图理论”（puzzle theory）一词。最后，为了理解在此道路或行动中主宰变化的法则，我们可以运用三元逻辑（trialectic logic），如此称呼是因为《易经》是据天、地、人三才之交互作用建构起来的。

当我们遇到难题而不知如何是好时，我们常常向可靠的人——家长、老师或可靠的朋友寻求建议。我们之所以如此做是因为我们的主观性让我们无法清楚地明了问题的症结所在。我们的情绪与该问题如此地交织在一起，以至于让我们无法看清问题的真相。当我们向他人解释该问题时，两个执行因素会影响到问题的解决。其一，我们要把问题向他们进行清晰的描述，详细说明所有的细节与可能，从而进一步理清其中的症结。其二，他人将会从另外的角度思考这一问题，因而可以提出更为客观的意见。将清晰的描述与更为客观的意见合并，或许会帮助我们解决问题。

《易经》回答我们所问问题的方式与此类似。一旦难题外化为向《易经》咨询的问题时，我们就会对我们的处境有一个更好的了解，并可接受《易经》对此问题的回答且据此采取行动。《易经》所给予我们的是，它让人们能够客观地看待自己的处境并采取适当的行动以获得成功。





“拼图理论”（puzzle theory）的前提是将某一拼图的散块进行组合以完成一幅图画。只有通过将每一散块进行精确的定位，才能得出一幅完整而正确的图画——而且它还含有对整体的一种理解。不管我们在拼图时已拼集了多少散块，如果有一些散块——甚或一个散块——丢失，最后的结果就会产生变化。比如，在某一风景画中丢失的散块或许表现为一道危险的悬崖或一棵美丽的树木。这些最后的散块对形成一幅完整的图画绝对重要。《易经》就扮演这样一种角色：它向我们提供答案所必需的所有散块，从而促使我们作出决定。

我们已经明白，《易经》向我们提供了一套综合把握天、地、人三才之道的办法。《易经》之所以能够做到这一点，是因为《易经》是以包涵天、地、人三才意蕴的八卦为根据的。因此，我们行动的成功与否就取决于我们是否获得了三者之间的完美平衡。《易经》向我们展示了行动逻辑之道，该道根据恰当的时机将我们置于恰当的位置。因此，顺应此三元（trialectic）逻辑并据《易经》先前给我们展示的道路依序采取行动，我们就会达至一个完全和谐之点——“三元之点”，在这一点上，我们所有可能的行动必然会获得成功。

最后，我们还必须记住，对我们生活中问题的所有回答已经内在于我们自身，尽管我们或许不能领悟到这一点。一旦我们以一种更为客观的方式来看待问题，我们就拥有了此处境下的所有散块，并会与整个宇宙和谐相处，我们无疑会解决我们的问题并完成我们的目标。

我们可以将《易经》作为一部总的智慧之书而选择它，我们也可以通过运用其咨询功能而选择它。但不管在哪种情况下，我们都可以从其意象中得到启示并获得道德上的指导，从而丰富我们的生活，并以让我们能够更好地服务社会的方式，把我们提升为更好的人。

4. 古代咨询《易经》的方法

古代用两种方法起卦进行占筮：一种是用五十根蓍草进行占筮的揲蓍法；一种是用三枚铜钱进行占筮的金钱课。两种方法都是通过一爻一爻获得，从初爻画起，直至上爻，最后形成一个六画卦。揲蓍法是将五十根蓍草进行数次的分合，最后得到的数字只有四种情况：9（老阳之数，为变爻，用  表示），6（老阴之数，为变爻，用  表示），7（少阳之数，用  表示），8（少阴之数，用  表示）。（O和X只是传统的标记变爻的符号，也可以用其他方式来表示，但不管怎样表示，它们都代表此为老阴或老阳之爻，老阴之爻下一步要变为少阳之爻，老阳之爻下一步要变为少阴之爻。）六画卦是从初爻至上爻逐步获得的，所遇之卦存在有变爻与无变爻之分，其答案也就因之而不相同。

如果初次所得之卦全无变爻，该卦（卦辞）就被认为是问题的答案。如果该卦有变爻，初次所得之卦（称为原卦）卦辞与爻变后所得的卦（称为之卦）卦辞皆作为问题的答

案。原卦卦辞表示目前的情势，之卦卦辞表示将来的情势。问题的答案集中在原卦变爻之爻辞及之卦中由原卦变爻所变之爻的爻辞。

金钱代筮法乃运用中国古代外圆内方的铜钱为工具。有汉字的一面（又称“字”）用数字2来表示，其反面（无汉字的一面，又称“背”）用数字3来表示。每摇抛一次所得的数字之和为6、7、8或9。要抛六次以获得六画之卦，也是由初爻开始画，直至上爻。

这两种占筮方法当今可能会被认为是神秘或迷信的，但重要的是，我们要把蓍草作为植物王国的廉价产品并因而与生活及宇宙息息相通来看待。从蓍草得到佑助的价值在于，它能够帮助我们获得一种接受性的性格及向天地敞开心扉的心态。在用金钱课进行占问时，同样需要这样一种心态。

5. 本书提出的咨询方法

我在本书提出的咨询方法与上述两种方法有很大的不同。我推荐一种方法，该方法以获得本书知识为根据，并让咨询者积极地参与其中。

本书是在将每一卦作为一个整体进行理解的基础上而完成的，我对每一卦及其所有可能的变化进行综合与具体的分析之后，对每一卦有了一个总体的把握。因此，在本书的每一卦中，将不对具体的每一爻进行描述。

对本书进行总体的阅读将有助于把握每一卦的要义，但没有必要将本书以线性的方式从头读到尾。这是一本发现与学习之书。我建议对它进行休闲式的阅读，浏览一些章节以在某一天发现那些你认为有感染力的章节。对本书翻阅得越多，对每一卦的内涵及指导意义就理解得越深刻。

如果你有这一愿望，《易经》就可以为解决我们所面临的问题或对具体情势所产生的疑问给予指导。不管是哪种情况，你都应该阅读那些看起来与你的处境最为相关的章节。再就是，这些必须符合上面所说的原则才可以。所问问题要清楚了，只能就两种选择中的一种进行咨询。另外，还要考虑到你此时此刻的想法与感觉。比如，面对一种不可逾越的障碍而感到无能为力时，可以将你引导至蹇卦（意为阻塞，第39卦）。如果不能作出决定，为看不清走哪条路所困扰，你可以选择噬嗑卦（意为决定，第21卦）。

如果你为自己想完成的目标而激动，查看豫卦（意为热情激动，第16卦）可能是一个比较好的选择。

读者熟悉本书后，就会更容易找到能够给予自己正在寻求得到答案的卦。当有疑问时，读者可以查找附于每卦之下的内容提要，作为了解各卦之意义（紧接在各卦卦名之后的部分）的附加线索。另一个可能的选择就是随便翻阅本书，并在最吸引自己的图画面前停住，以对与此图画相应的卦名及卦象进行思考。所有这些选择都需要读者的积极参与，不管是在锁定问题时，还是在经过深思熟虑后寻找能够显现处境的卦作为行动指南时，都是如此。确定合适的卦，在开始时可能会是一种挑战，但对本书研究得越多、理解得越深入，就越容易找到对你最有帮助的卦。不管你选择哪种方法，《易经》将一如既往地作为智慧之源为我们提供服务。

必须指出的是，《易经》认为自然（整个宇宙万有）一直处于动变之中，因此，在你进行咨询的当下，你的处境或者是稳定的，或者是不稳定的（如你的生活正被许多错综复杂的问题所困扰时）。如果在选择了你认为合适的卦之后，你仍不明白它所给予的指导，这就有可能表示情况将要发生变化。在这种情况下，你必须将原卦变为其反对卦（又称“旁通卦”），即将原卦中的阳爻（——）变为阴爻（--），阴爻变为阳爻。一旦你得出了原卦之反对卦，你就查看反对卦之内容。为便于读者寻找反对卦，我在每一卦的下面皆列出了该卦的反对卦及其在本书中的序号。原卦之卦义代表目前的处境，反对卦的卦义代表如果什么措施都不采取将会出现的情势。一旦明白了这一点，你就会采取适当的行动以改变你的处境。如果在翻阅反对卦卦义后你仍不得其解，你就干脆把本书放在一边，被动地让《易经》之教浸润你的思考。等到你的心态放松下来之后，事情就可以较清晰地呈现出来。

既然《易经》之易象与意蕴紧密相联，较深入地学习本书将会加深你对易象与意蕴之关系的印象。最终你就会不仅仅停留在对自然风景画进行美的欣赏的水平，而会以一种新的视角来看待它，并从一种新的自然之境界中受到启发。这样，《易经》就成为你生活的有机组成部分了。

6. 本书作者的愿望

如果我们能用数年的时间来学习《易经》，我们就可以像孔子所说的那样“无大过”了。但《易经》还教导我们说，千里之行，始于足下。我自己也是刚刚迈出了千里之行的第一步。我写此书的目的是为读者如何通过《易经》的易象从风景画中获得美的享受，从中学习并发现明智的建议和行动指南，从而引领人们渡过生活中的艰难时刻。

就像从世界各地寻找智慧的那位学者一样，我们同样能够在家里找到内心的平和。为了这种平和之境我们能做些什么，就全由我们自己决定了。



六十四卦及其意象图画



1. 乾（天，创造性的）



乾下乾上

需要创造性理念时，就以乾卦刚健有为的精神为指导。

天与地在无穷的天际相合为一。天性上腾，地性下降。天地氤氲而化生万物。

仁爱、道德、正义、自强不息是乾的根本属性。要领导一个国家，领导人就必须爱他的百姓。如果用暴力或恐吓让他们屈服，他们的反抗会强烈得以摧枯拉朽之势使整个国家陷于瘫痪。道德是组织整个社会围绕一个共同目标奋斗所必需的。正义用于防止不公平并让人们得以平和通泰地生活。基于智慧的自强不息可照亮前进的道路。天统御时间，万物依天而有其始，天包含一切生机，生机是无穷的而又是可变的，在此点上过去与将来连在一起。时间给我们把握命运的力量，因为我们今天的所作所为可以塑造我们的明天。乾天能给予我们启发与指导，保护并伴随我们在世间的所有旅程。

乾天之创造性通过刚健不息表现出来。行动必须基于理念，而且我们要有完成它所必需的力量。在前进的征途中，我们决不能忽视小的细节，因为小的细节久而久之会酿成大的障碍。耐性也是提高创造力所必不可少的品质。一旦我们取得成功，耐性可以帮助我们守住成功。天性刚健不息，而我们前进的脚步还应该济之以坤地柔顺之性，因此，天地可以融合于一张美丽的风景画。

反对卦：2. 坤（地，接受性的）





天与地
在无穷的
边际
相合为一。

Heaven and Earth
joined
in an
infinite line.

2. 坤*（地，接受性的）



坤下坤上

如果缺乏行动力，就让坤卦所象征的大地来为你提供营养。

天与地在无穷的天际相合为一。天性上腾，地性下降。天地氤氲而化生万物。

坤性随顺、专一、温和、正固。随顺指随遇而安；坤地以其随顺承载天下万物并养育人类；温和才能成就大业；最后，正固与正义相伴而行。大地以其空间属性而与时间互补，因为时间只能在空间中发挥作用；反过来，空间也因时间而展开。时间勾画行为，而空间则表达行为，将行为扩展至全人类并给他们提供家园。通过空间表达的每一善行会成为编织生命之布的每一根线。即使善行不连续，在空间所积之善行也将持续发挥作用并给我们带来和平。通过天地交合，时空中的任何事情皆可得以实现。

创造性的过程必须济之以一定时段的接受性。创造性与接受性应该谐和地融入到人们的生活中。如果我们在咨询中遇到坤卦为问题的答案，我们就必须接受坤卦的指导。为了毫无困难地找到出路，我们必须相信存在无形的力量。这并不意味着无所事事，因为准备性的步骤必须完成，以填补空虚。完美应该是我们行为的目标，因为坤亦有此属性。即便我们发现自己在沉默和思考中度过，我们也会相信光明最终一定会照亮我们的人生。从乾坤之平衡和谐和中，风景之美将得以呈现。

反对卦：1. 乾（天，创造性的）



* 对代表天地合而为一之象的解释：作为一位艺术家，我觉得让“天空”充满整个画布会缺乏和谐。同样，如果只画“大地”就缺乏统一性和协调性。因此，我便决定将无穷的边际相合为一之天地画在一幅画中。



天与地
在无穷的
边际
相合为一。

Heaven and Earth
joined
in an
infinite line.

3. 屯（初始之困难）



震下坎上

面对困难和迷惑时，要一直将注意力集中于自己的目标。

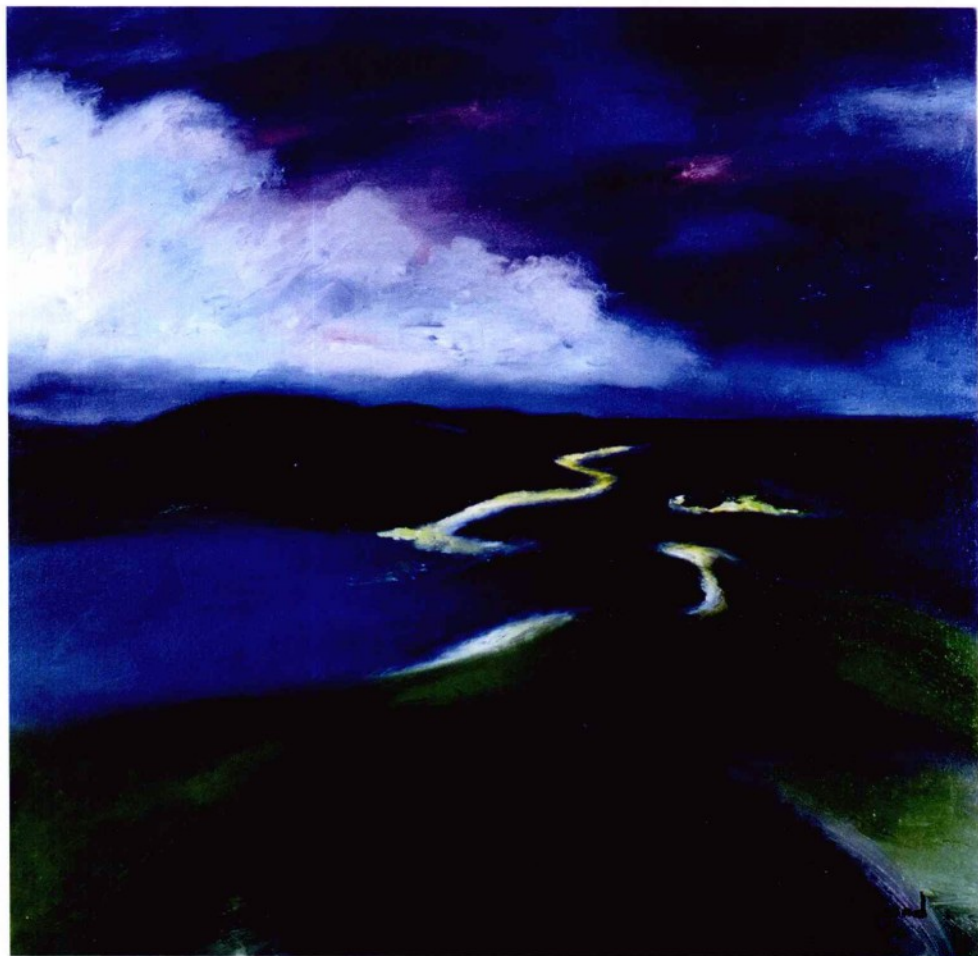
雷水相激，会产生极大的混乱与不宁。水雷相激之紧张表现于天空，而大地之轮廓则显示一种潜在的秩序。水与雷相激而成图画上面的暴风雨。暴风雨过后，雷水之紧张得以消解，混乱让位于有序，行动获得成功。

混乱乍看起来令人恐惧、令人惊慌失措、令人感到困难重重，但正在此点上才蕴含着无限生机。此情势还预示着盛大之势将要到来。任何事物的成形阶段均易令人感到困惑与困难重重，但此阶段亦含有成功之钥匙。运动会妨碍我们看清行动的道路，但大的成功就在眼前，因为雷与水预示着强大的力量和毅力。混乱终会消失，表明和平通泰的风景就在眼前。

大的事业就在我们面前——确定混乱，理清头绪并把握局势。要完成这一事业，我们就必须运用智慧并坚持不懈。如果我们不得不启航而行，手忙脚乱不会把我们引向成功，我们必须寻求帮助而不单独采取行动。命运总是馈赠那些发现打开神秘钥匙的人，我们绝不能失去目标。在这个困难阶段，其他人可能会把我们引向相反的方向，因为他们自己也处于混乱之中而不愿为摆脱困境而付出努力。或者他们会阻碍我们成功。在这种情况下，我们必须极其小心，以防偏离我们的目标。注意风景画中的意象，我们可以用了数笔勾画出解决初始之困难的解救之雨。

反对卦：50. 鼎（鼎器）





白色
把蓝色分开
又让蓝色
连合为一。

White
divides blues,
while uniting
them.

4. 蒙（童年之蒙昧）



坎下艮上

当被危险所麻痹时，要保持灵活随顺、行事如河中之水。

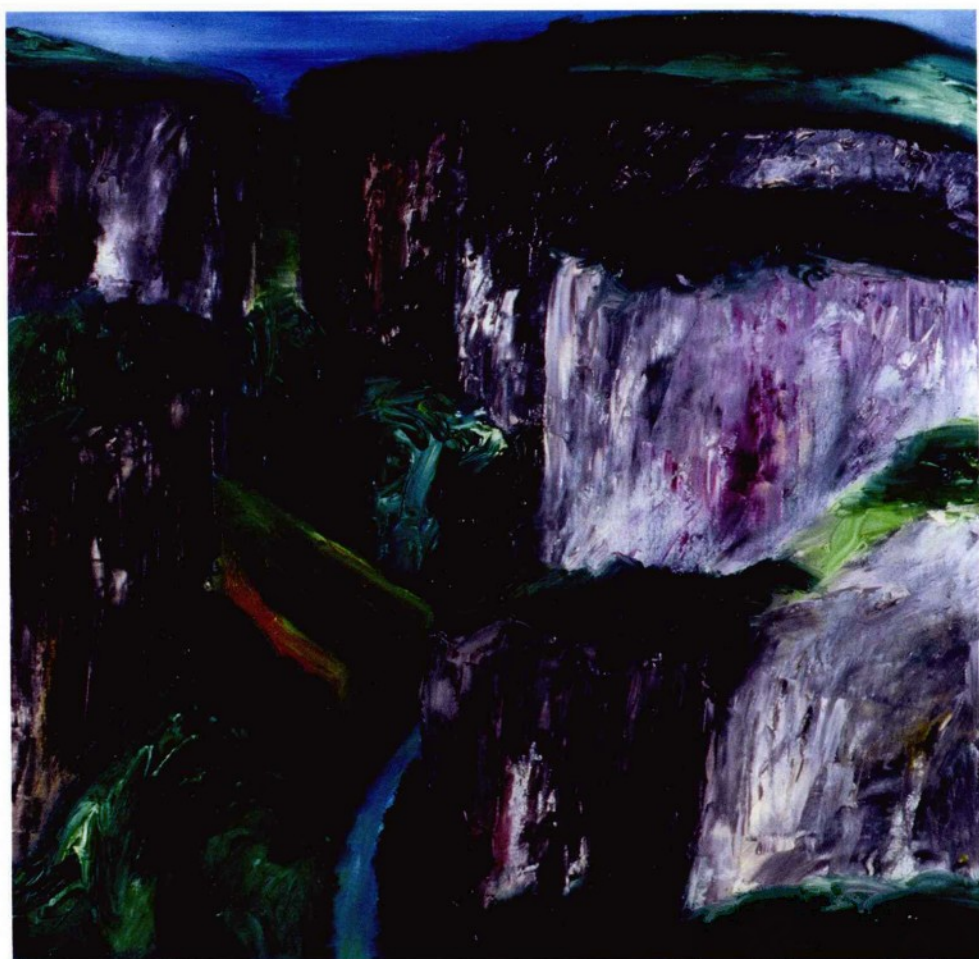
小溪从山崖中蜿蜒而行，越过障碍，寻找空隙，以逃过限制与危险。在初始蒙昧之际，它不顾隐约出现的令人恐怖的山脉，而同样的初始之蒙昧亦使它欢快地穿过狭谷，投向山谷温柔的怀抱。

令人麻痹的危险会模糊人的判断力。在危险面前持续僵冻只会变得更为麻木。年轻人常常通过勇猛而欠思考的行为逃过危险。当勇敢的行动可以帮助我们躲过狭谷之时，我们必须记住水的力量在于其随顺性。为了越过危险并达到目标，有必要采取童蒙适应性强之特点，像水一样可以根据不同的地形调整自己的流向。但这样的行动只适合当下的形势。一旦危险已经过去，童年蒙昧的行为会将我们引向另一个危险的陷阱。童蒙作为一种策略必须总是在符合其一定的情势时使用，因为大自然是不可欺骗的。

似非而是的是，我们必须将果敢的行动与率真的性情结合起来。同时，我们必须特别注意我们自己性格的塑造。我们的行动需要顺其自然，但要决然而行，并一直警醒地关注着最终的目标。重要的是要寻找一个明智的、能帮助我们明白采取不同的行为所导致的不同后果的人。然后，我们必须坚信他所给予的忠告，明白其经验并结合以勇敢，这样必定会让我们获得成功。这一似非而是的理念融于风景画的意象之中。童蒙之举让我们躲过危险并继续前行。不管小溪多么微小，其面带微笑的前行令它越过障碍而找到出路。

反对卦：49. 革（更新）





微小
却欢快地
从危险中
穿过。

Small,
but passes
joyfully
through danger.

5. 需（等待）



乾下坎上

等待不易，但时间是你的盟友，而不是你的敌人。

云彩开始在天空中聚集，而在下面的大地正等待雨的降临以滋润田地、生长食物。不管土地多么肥沃，如果没有雨的滋养，其循环就不会得以完成。

等待不易，但我们绝不可将等待与无所事事相混淆。等待的本质是时间，时间常常被当作要战胜的敌人，而不是被看作帮助我们达到目标的盟友。我们被诱导去干涉自然界之循环，强迫事情发生。这是因为，在大多数情况下，我们对最后的结果不敢确定。然而，如果我们明白自然现象将会按照普遍法则展开，我们就能够预测未来，而且等待的阶段就会在自信最后能够成功中度过。

要自信地等待，我们首先要让时间成为我们的盟友。这只有在我们具备内在的力量时才能成为可能。在等待之时，我们需要通过培养友谊和镇静来增强我们的实力与精神。有时我们会感到失去了方向，我们也许开始认为我们的努力已成徒劳。但如果我们镇定而自信地坚持下去，我们就会获得成功。我们必须密切注意成功的情势是怎样自我呈现的，因为外表可能是骗人的。机不可失，失不再来。我们必须准备好接受等待的挑战。它需要耐心，而且要认清有利形势，确信循环将会完成，目标将会达到。

反对卦：35. 晋（进步）





水
将滋养
颜色的
精华。

Water
will nourish
the essence of
colors.

6. 讼（冲突）



坎下乾上

面对冲突，要运用你的智慧予以让步或撤退。

天与水具有同样的威力，但天之蓝与水之蓝被岩石隔开。天空涵着带雨的云，但大海决不会允许其宽阔与天之无限相混合，因此，深邃（的大海）与无限（的天空）仍然相互分离。

冲突是由方向相反造成的。冲突一旦发生，就会扫除道路上的任何事物，因为互相矛盾的力量相互毁坏对方。避免冲突需要超常的力量和准确的判断，只认为自己是对的并为自己辩护是没用的。冲突会把我们搅入其中。如果冲突强于正义，分道扬镳和争执不休就不可避免，即便有英勇之举也无济于事。当危险威胁到我们内心的平和时，就只有机智能够拯救我们。重要的是，我们要躲开正在面临的危险以保持我们的本性。

我们必须提高了解当下冲突之性质的判断能力。我们所面临的只有两种选择：一是妥协，以免危及我们的整体；一是通过暂时的撤退以避开当前的形势。这种情况下的撤退不是软弱的表现，而是机智的表现。我们必须通过分析明白，导致冲突的不可调和的形势是由将会随着时间的流逝而消沉的具体情势造成的，还是双方存在根本的对立而不能得以和平解决。如果是后面这种情况，撤退就是惟一的选择。撤退必须是在自信我们将会达到目标的前提下作出的。属于我们并源于我们内在本性的东西将会回归于我们，就像天之蓝与海之蓝重新合为一体一样。

反对卦：36. 明夷（光明被遮蔽）





威胁性的
岩石
把蓝色
分开。

Menacing
rock
divides
the blues.

7. 师（军队）



坎下坤上

在战斗中，机智、战备和正义会占上风。

大地耸立于水流之上，而水流向下透出，形成一条缓缓流淌的小河。地下的河流是不可见的，但其影响却反映于地表，而大地则时刻准备着在必要的时候取用河水。

部队在和平时期就像一支正面的、不可见的力量，但它一直准备着面对敌人以防被敌人消灭。然而，只有把部队用作防御的正当的政府才能成功地团结百姓。为了确保同意服役的人之间的合作，政府必须以宽大和正义为原则。部队需要组织纪律性，并且必须由一个人们共同信任的人来率领。只有通过能力与内在信念之表现才能赢得他人的尊敬。军队必须为了正义才能召集起来。

我们必须做好战斗的准备。这是危机时期，但如果我们通过积蓄力量并且机智行动，就会获得成功。在所有的战斗中，有三个因素能够决定战斗的胜利。首先，一定不要轻敌；其次，我们决不可期望用不正当的手段达到正当的目的——非正义永远不会产生正义；最后，我们必须真正地为战斗作好准备。如果我们尚未作好准备，就应该下令适时地撤退。这并不是怯弱的表现，而有其积极的意义。如果所有条件都具备了，我们就会获得丰硕的胜利果实。正如你调动你内在的资源以获取胜利一样，地下之水在必要的时候会升至地表。

反对卦：13. 同人（与人和同）

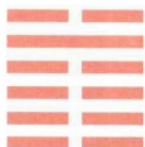




也许
它的出现
让河流
感到惊讶。

Perhaps
its presence
surprised
the river.

8. 比（团结一致）



坤下坎上

在与其他人联合亲比时，要么选择成为领导者，要么选择成为跟随者。

水注入大地的所有空隙，将大地拥入怀抱。有时水会覆盖大陆，只让岛屿露出水面。岛屿依附于海底，努力向上以见到天。

团结一致可以产生非同寻常的力量。在寻求团结他人时，我们或者选择成为领导者，或者选择成为跟随者。重要的是要作出正确的选择。成为领导者需要勇气、前后一致的表现和实力。只有通过充分的准备才能胜任这一位置。当我们应该成为领导者而选择次要位置时，或者如果我们不具备必要的实力而试图占据领导位置，就不可能取得成功。寻求团结他人的时机和动机都很重要。如果我们失去团结他人的最佳时机，此门就会永远向我们关闭。如果寻求团结他人的理由不是以正义为基础，我们就不可能与他人联合成功。

只有与志同道合的人联合在一起，团结才会成功。团结一致本身是一个空洞的概念。岛屿可以联合在一起，但它们依附于海床为支撑。联合不是目的，而是达到目标的手段。有时生活会把我们置于与我们内心本性相悖的处境中。在一种想象的团结他人的名义下，我们可能被迫适应敌对的情势。在此情况下，我们就必须特别小心，从而抵制负面的影响。与此相反，如果与他人联合的时机成熟、事业正当，联合的目标就可以达成。团结一致可以获得一种就像岛屿突显出海面一样的明显可见的成功。

反对卦：14. 大有（大部分地拥有）





它们依附于
大海
以把握住
它们的岸。

They cling to
the sea
to hold
their shores.

9. 小畜（小的积蓄）



乾下巽上

小问题能积成大障碍，持续努力才能导致成功。

微风从平原上吹过，缺乏形成云的力量，因而需要有耐心。天空仍然有形成浅云的迹象。缓解之势已经在望，期待中的平原等待着雨的降临。

当我们面对一项大事业时，我们也许会在时机未成熟的情况下去承担它，试图尽早着手，而不是等待最佳时机。准备工作总是很重要的，对重大项目来说，更是如此。仓促而动的结果将是灾难，因为在条件未成熟时所做的一切最终总会失去。我们可能会低估我们将遇到的困难而过高地估计我们的实力。有时小问题会积攒成比大障碍更令人不堪重负的外在压力。因此，我们必须一步一个脚印地谨慎前行，让每一个小事业的完成汇集成大的结果，就像云块聚集成雨一样。

当问题积攒得不多时，我们也许会相信它们易于处理。但相信易于处理而不对形势进行较深入的分析是危险的。不是首先停下来积蓄力量而是仓促而行是错误的。关键是，我们采取的每一行动，甚至是小的行动，也要获得成功。我们承认当前的形势，待时而动。现在不是开展大事业之时，而是维持既得成就之时。不继续努力，所有我们已经得到的也将失去。如果我们朝着目标坚持不懈，密云就会积蓄成雨。

反对卦：16. 豫（热情激动）





风
在溪谷中鸣响，
但没有云彩
予以回应。

The wind sounds
in the valley,
but not a cloud
answers.

10. 履（礼仪举止）



兑下乾上

如果生活将你置于次要的位置，你就要运用判断力，并有尊严地行事。

天与泽处于不同的平面。天在上而泽居于大地的中央。它们依其本性存在于完美的和谐之中。在地平线上没有暴风雨，天与泽在此宁静的风景画中相互对视。

有时我们的位置是命中注定的，而在其他时间我们则被迫处于我们所期望和我们的能力所应达到的位置之下。出于虚荣心，我们或许不惜一切代价向上攀爬，但在此过程中我们却失去了我们的尊严。就像天与泽宁静相处一样，处于下位的人不要对处在其上的成功人士怀有嫉妒之心。在下位自有在下位的好处。我们不负有上级所应尽的义务，而且我们可以在平和中自由发展我们的精神层面，可以在没有外界压力下进行思考。因此，我们能够获得更为准确的判断。如果能够明白在一生中我们现在所处位置的缘由，我们就不必忧虑，因为我们知道，最终我们所获得的地位，将会与我们的功劳更为相称。通过耐心等待，当时机到来时，我们会准备好承担领导责任，并能够对他人产生有益的影响。

我们绝不能嫉妒我们周围的人，也不要问为什么我们处于较低的位置。因为我们没有社会义务，所以我们的逐渐进步将不会间断。命运是不可欺的，它已为我们准备好成功，但我们只有循序渐进才能达到成功。现在是保持有尊严的行为的时候，而不是试图有大的成就的时候。我们不应过高地估计我们的实力而冲动行事，因为这样会让我们前功尽弃。因此，当面临一项大事业时，我们会先完成所有必须完成的环节，以夺取最后的胜利。

反对卦：15. 谦（谦虚）





天与
泽
互视
并微笑着。

Heaven and
lake
regard each other
and smile.

11. 泰（通泰合和）



乾下坤上

你也许能够实现通泰合和，但要保持这一状态则需努力不懈。

天地处于平衡协调的状态之中，呈现出一幅通泰合和之景象。但当大地舍弃自我而移向天空时，大地就失去与其本性的联系。起伏的丘陵即将改变天地的平衡协调，但大地可以下降至属于它的无垠的初始的地方。

在人间，当为一个共同的目标团结一致时，就可以实现通泰合和之境。这是一个百花齐放的时代，是一个成就大事业的时代，大事业之所以能够成功，是因为它们得利于通泰合和的环境。但目前的任务必须在他人的帮助下才能完成，如果我们证明我们能够展现春天般的生机与活力，他们就会跟随我们。在通泰合和时期，如果放任自流，任其发展，事情就会转入否闭不通的状态，因为在通泰合和之时，人们易于放松自己而不再努力。尽管通泰合和是一种极为有利的状态，要想保持这一状态则需要非同寻常的努力。

只要我们条件适合并具有必要的实力，就是可以采取大规模行动之时。我们必须与众人通力合作，甚至与那些有缺点和弱小的人，也是如此。非常时期需要非常的手段。我们必须毫不犹豫、毫无疑问地前行。如果干扰我们行程的消极因素出现，我们必须暂时休息，待时机转好后再继续前行。即便任何方面皆指向最后的成功，有时前进也需要小退几步。通泰合和还隐含着否闭不通，但依靠艰苦努力，要获得长期的通泰合和还是有可能的。

反对卦：12. 否（否闭不通）





连接天地的
大道
在此
弯弯曲曲。

The line that heaven
and earth lend
to the infinite
becomes curved.

12. 否（否闭不通）



坤下乾上

与否闭不通之境进行斗争，可以提供成功所必需的力量。

秋天到来时，天空远离大地。秋分过后，秋天即显出衰退之象。天地分离，大地之气为长时间的冬眠季节而凝结。

此时，万物否闭，行为冻结，惰性笼罩着整个大地。通泰之内在法则已导致否闭不通，但似非而是的是，这也是一个十分有利的征兆。通泰合和自然会转向否闭不通，但否闭不通不会自动转向通泰合和。一定阶段的通泰需要极大的努力来维持，但否闭不通则需要非同寻常的努力才能转化为通泰合和。如果只盯着否闭不通的消极方面而停止不前，我们就难于看到任何有利的方面。我们一定要相信，总会有走出困境之路，而且我们与否闭不通作斗争所付出的努力将积聚伟大的力量；一旦我们获得成功，这一力量仍会持续下去。

我们必须极其谨慎，拒绝抛头露面之提议，即便这些提议是有利的或是奉承性的，我们也要予以拒绝。现在不是接受不劳而获或不当的认可或报酬的时候。我们绝不能被否闭不通中的玄妙力量所左右。现在是撤退、并从内部为将来的前进作好准备之时。我们必须衡量摆在我们面前的每一障碍，以获得能够克服障碍的均衡的力量。我们不应试图摧毁这些障碍，而应该绕过它们。通过运用智慧与努力，我们就会转否闭不通为通泰合和。天地最终还会再一次走向交泰合和。

反对卦：11. 泰（通泰合和）





它的行动
受到阻碍，
但它
能够躲过……

Its movement
is impeded,
but it
can escape. . .

13. 同人（与人和同）



离下乾上

如果不能单独完成行动，就要寻求与人和同。

天之明与火之明相合为一。当人们聚在炉边享受他们的劳动果实时，大地也被照亮。如果没有人的因素，如此强烈的光明所产生的能量就会过多。在路的尽头，火是家的象征。

与人和同可以让人们获得承担最困难的风险所需要的强大的力量。大的行动需要巨大的努力，这只有通过与人联合才能实现。在与人和同时，重要的是要维持与家之间的联系。在进行任何一项非同寻常的事业之前，应该将饮食与休息所需要的条件提前准备好。一旦做好某项决定，就必须迅速行动。火性急，转瞬即逝，能迅速把木头烧成灰烬。因此，行动必须坚定、迅速、果断，以在火焰熄灭之前获得成功。同时，每一行动必须在作好判断之后进行。

天与火照耀万物，揭露隐藏的想法。行动必须基于针对清晰、正确的目标所作出的公正判断。要想获得一个公正的判断并决然而行，我们就需要我们的合作者的帮助，因为这是与人和同、分享之时。我们缺乏单独获得成功的实力，寻求帮助并不表示软弱。火需要人们手联手，从而让提供光亮与食物的火焰持续燃烧。只有当火加热食物以养育整个家庭时，房屋才会变成一个家。

反对卦：7. 师（军队）





路的
尽头
是大地与家的
果实。

At the end
of the road
the fruits of earth
and home.

14. 大有（大部分地拥有）



乾下离上

面对大事业，清晰的判断、公正和共享会带来成功。

火焰高耸入天，与太阳的光辉连在一起。在其强光下，万物皆得以显现。大地接受火与天的能量，风景在光耀下颤动。

此象的意义是判断明确，行动果断。人性中有力量，社会中有文化，因为闪耀的太阳光照万物，使人们得到启发。不管是好的还是坏的意向，在阳光下皆得以显现，任何事物都不再继续隐藏。我们可以实现大有之目标，但前进的道路是艰辛的，我们必须寻求帮助者的共同努力、并分享得到的回报。超载会压垮车辆，但如果他人帮助我们减轻负担，就可以把我们送到目的地。单独拥有不会让我们富有；富有并不仅仅取决于所得物资的数量，还取决于我们得到它们的可能性及其用途。

采取大规模行动的时机已经到来。是作出重大决定并予以实施的时候了。如果基于完美的判断且毫不迟疑，我们的行为就会带给我们好运。决不要把成功看作目标本身，而且所获得的果实要与大家分享。对已获成就，要谨防过度的自鸣得意，因为这将是进一步前行的障碍。大有（大部分地拥有）的机会转瞬即逝，我们必须在这段时间内最好地发挥我们的能量以完成大的事业。火与天照亮我们前行的路。

反对卦：8. 比（团结一致）

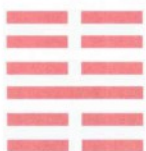




我们不可能
忽视
被启蒙的
大地的力量。

It is impossible
to ignore
the power of
enlightened earth.

15. 谦（谦虚）



艮下坤上

对待生活中的任何事及生活本身，都要让谦德成为你性格的一部分。

大大山立在天地之间，捕捉住浮云，云中之雨滋润着大地。山高地卑。如果大山将其根本藏于地下，就会失去其生机，而大地支撑着崩落的山体。这就是谦德之无所不能的力量。

谦卦是大吉之卦，因为谦的力量是来自人的内在本性的外在表现。天道让盈满受到亏损，让谦虚得到补益；谦德是强大的，因为任何事物都不是谦德的对手。谦德让社会的不同阶层得到均衡而不图名声，与嫉妒及忿恨截然不同。要顺应天道，我们就必须清空生命中的负面因素，而代之以谦虚之德。如此，则任何事情都不会阻挡我们的成功之路。

如果不首先根除过去的错误和目前的犹豫不决，就不能决然前行。新事物需要生根、成长及培养正面品质的空间。应该让谦德一直伴随这一过程。如果已大获成功而仍然保持谦虚，就会受到所有人的称扬。如果只完成了小事业，谦虚就会让它们显得更为伟大。不管在哪种情况下，谦虚的人都会毫无阻力地走向最终的成功。就像大山将其能力隐藏于地下一样，只将一小部分显露于碧绿的平原上，因此谦德显露于外，而其真正的力量则隐藏于内。山脉与大地一起被均衡地绘于一幅和谐的风景画中。

反对卦：10. 履（礼仪举止）





陆地的
余脉
从深处
显现出来。

Remnants of
land
emerging
from the depths.

16. 豫（热情激动）



坤下震上

如果你想获得并传播逸豫之情，就要修炼沉着与平衡。

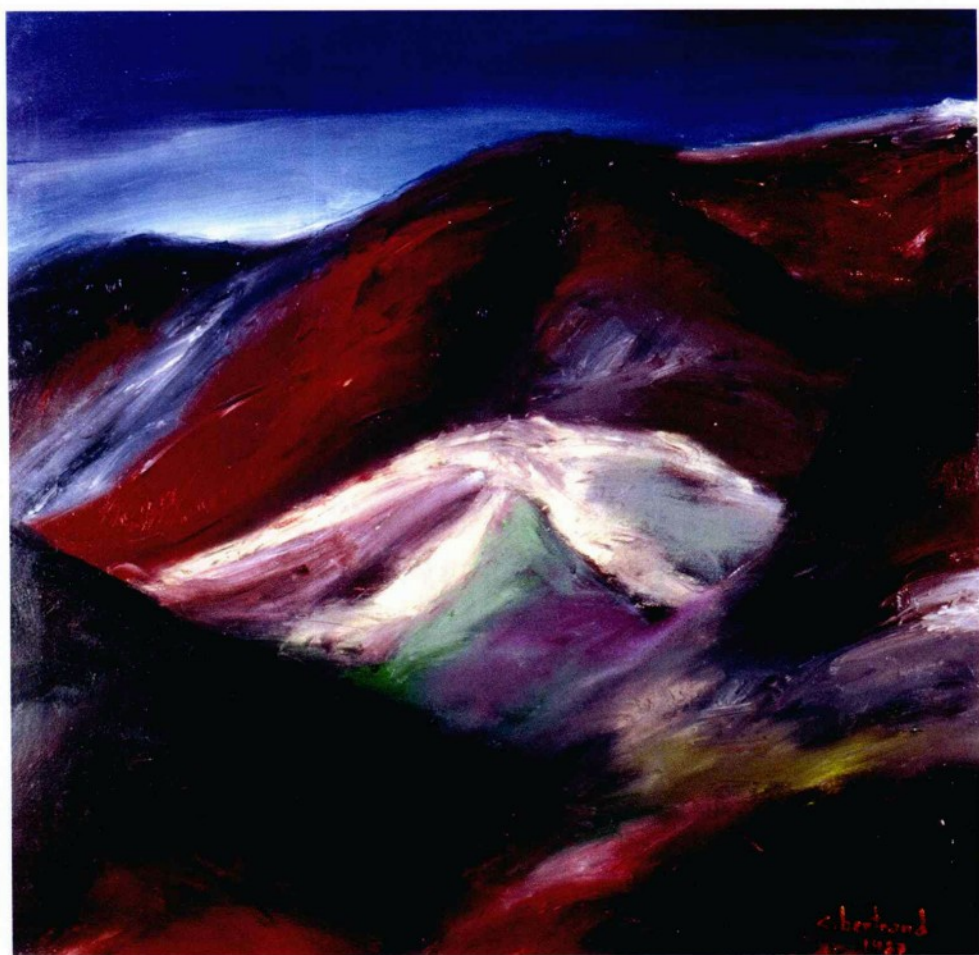
初夏，强大的雷从大地升起并展现于空中，预示着暴风雨的到来和紧张的消解。雷声仅仅浮现于表面，但其力量却延盖整个大地。

豫卦象征着沿着最没有阻力的线路前进，没有障碍并与时间同步。暴风雨过后，紧张得以消解，大自然进行自由的呼吸并为新季节的到来作好准备。在人文世界，被消解的是心灵的迷惑和性格的僵固不化。要使这些得以消解，我们必须发动同样的逸豫之情、并通过音乐和舞蹈体验着敞开心扉。逸豫欢乐具有感染性，只要帮助我们的人能够参与其中，他们就会前来接受并分担重担。我们不应该利用这种帮助，也不该让逸豫之情发挥太过。前进的步伐需要平衡，以防堕于肤浅了事。

我们必须首先培养我们内在的逸豫之情，积攒必需的力量与沉着，以便在来日的行动中达致中和。我们的能量应以柔和的方式展现给他人，以让他们继续与我们合作。当我们已作好准备且时机就在眼前时，我们的行动就一定要准确并成为人们行为的典范。人们会跟随我们，因为逸豫之情可以让跟随者受到鼓舞。这是一个充满活力但使人精疲力竭的时段。我们必须停下来，休息一下，以便在恢复我们的行动之前，镇静一下我们情绪，享受一下我们的既得成就。光亮从大地迸射而出，但要让它持续发光以继续照耀天空，则需要一定的工作。

反对卦：9. 小畜（小的积蓄）





大地似乎要
张开，
为亮光
让开道路。

Earth seems
to open,
making way
for the light.

17. 随（跟随）



震下兑上

要想吸引跟随者帮助完成某一目标，就要用宁静愉悦的办法把大家联合起来。

雷响发生于大泽中心的正上方，水面接受了雷的力量，雷声因此而休止。秋天，雷所宣发的电的力量移到大地的深层。当雷强大时，运动跟随着它；当雷休止时，运动仍然跟随着它。

当湖泽之欢悦、雷之力量及雷之运动联合发生时，跟随之势便产生了。愉悦必须通过安静来抑制才不会导致轻率的行动。而且不能以虚假的形式勉强而动，而应该根据行动的需要采取大的或小的行动。只有这样才会赢得他人的跟随。需要付出巨大的努力和智慧来适应这一时遇。愉悦能够获得简单的跟随并越过所有障碍，因为它不是假装出来的表现。这不是崭露头角之时，而是静守和聚集能量之时，就像雷声退缩以隐藏其力量一样。不久，我们发光的时刻就会到来，并足以能够持续影响跟随我们的人。

在跟随之时，我们必须自由地与各种人交往以更好地了解我们的处境。特别重要的是，我们要选择那些与我们志同道合的人为跟随者。可能跟随我们的浅薄或投机取巧者会阻碍我们前进的道路。关键是要将能够帮助我们的人和为了待在我们身边而阿谀奉承的人区别开来。洋洋得意于接受阿谀奉承者为跟随者将会妨碍我们的行动。就让愉悦作为我们的向导并放弃一切令我们悲哀的帮助吧！大泽只会愉悦地跟随响雷。

反对卦：18. 蛊（矫正）





黄昏时分
大泽
反射之光
寻找着奇遇。

The reflection of the
lake
at twilight
seeks adventure.

18. 蛊（矫正）



巽下艮上

感到虚弱且不能行动时，就要毅然决然地矫正自己的处境。

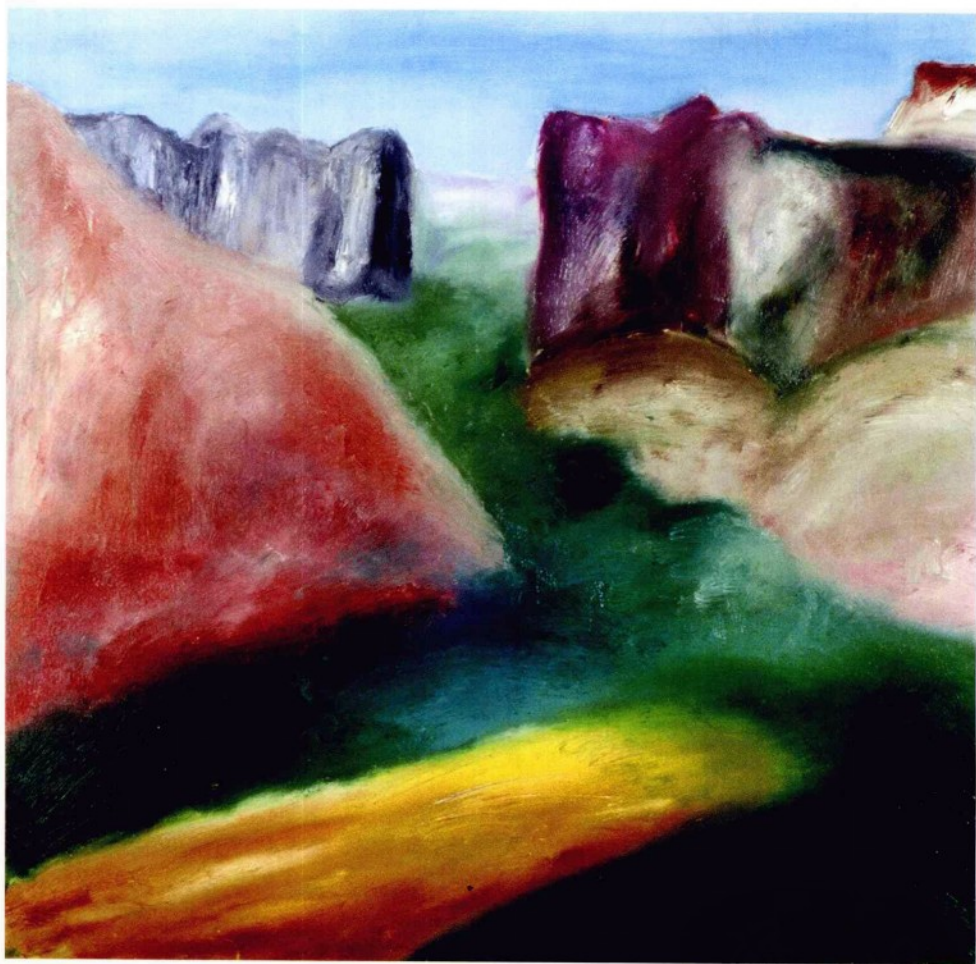
风在山脚下吹动，但不能升至高处，因而撤回到山谷，而且风在途中摧毁植物与花朵。大山阻止着风动，风力只得越变越轻以达至高处。

虚弱已导致惰性，消极因素刚开始表现出来时就应予以消除。惰性只能用强力的行动才能矫正。摆在我们面前的任务难以承担，但并不是不能完成。以前所犯的小错如果因惰性而得不到改正，就会铸成大错而阻碍我们前进的步伐。我们不能用优柔寡断或漠不关心的方式来克服强大的障碍。相反，我们必须用智慧与导致否闭不通的因素作斗争。我们必须像风一样让人们精神焕发，鼓励他们采取行动；同时，我们还必须像山一样稳重有力，以此来塑造我们的性格。我们面临的不是不可改变的命运，而是由我们的冷漠和僵化所导致的困境。艰苦工作不仅是改变已经恶化的外部环境所必须的，也是改变我们本身性格的不足所必须的。

我们必须对各种障碍进行系统的分析，以了解它们的根源所在。这一分析时期对最后的成功至关重要。如果对立面和僵力太强大而我们的力量又是有限的，我们就必须采取迂回的办法，寻求适当的时机，不大张旗鼓沉着而行，正像风环绕山以到达山的另一面一样。然后，只要我们有力量，我们就必须选定一条道路、并通过行动快速的工作来结束这一惰性期。有时必须首先靠我们自己来克服我们所看不到目标的内部障碍。如果我们成功地完成这些，我们就会自由地徜徉在欢迎我们的山谷中了。

反对卦：17. 随（跟随）





环绕着山的
风
十分浓重
但还是拥抱着大山。

Wind circling
the mountain
rarefies
but also embraces.

19. 临（来临）



兑下坤上

在向外寻求帮助时，要接受每一个有美好意图的人。

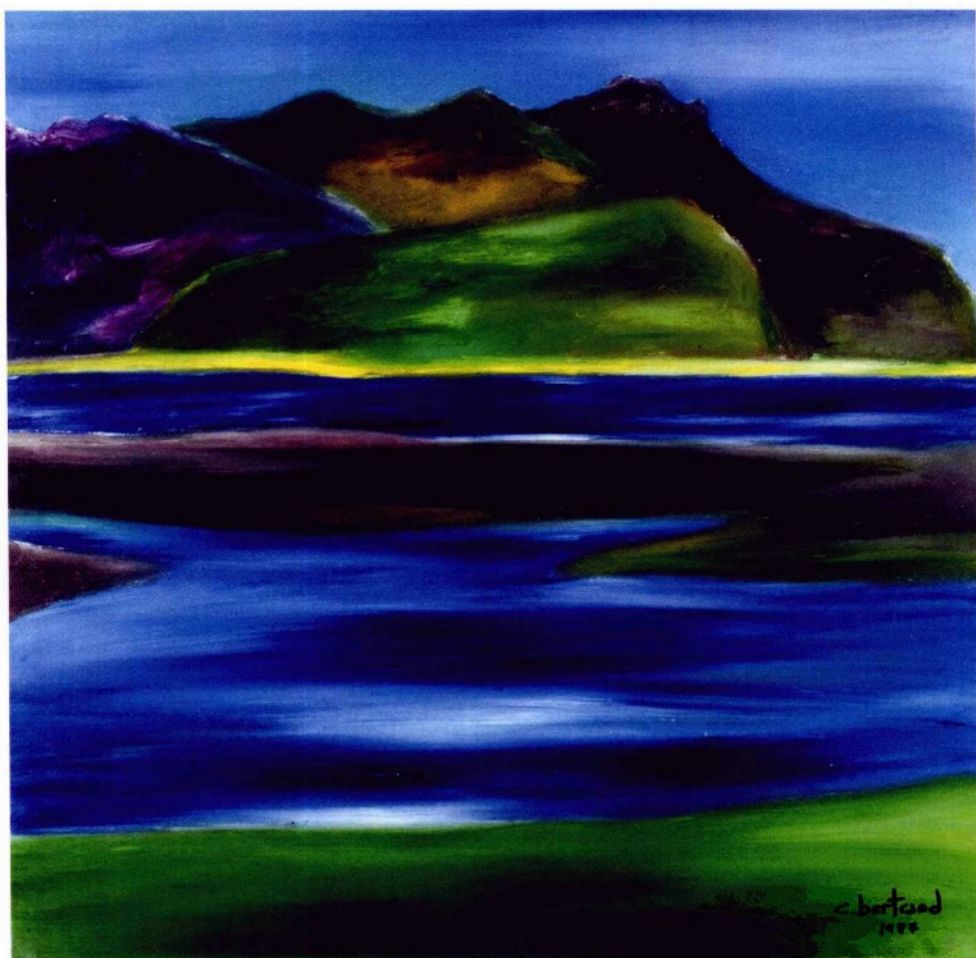
湖岸上面即是大地，大地以其无限之博大拥抱着大湖。湖泽的深沉向大地提供着静谧与营养。大地与湖泽相临，相互丰富着对方，将深层与表面相连。

来临之时十分吉利，但这种情势不会持续太长。现在，所有的力量都联合起来以促进变化、前进与成功。通过让每个人都受到教化可以使万物相互致临。致临总是要遵循相互的原则。领导应该以谦和的态度临近跟随他们的人，牢记如果没有跟随者，领导就失去了意义。领导必须选贤任能，而不管他们社会地位的高低。被选之人会以优秀的工作进行回报。这时的权力和地位决不要导致自我满足。只有看到行动之果实及跟随者之欢愉，领导才会获得真正的成功。一旦获得成功，就要与作出贡献的每一个人共同分享成功的果实。

这是充满希望而向成功进发的时候。我们必须避免自满和居高临下的感觉。重要的是要找到能帮助我们的贤能之人，并以谦和与真诚的态度接近他们，不排斥他们中的任何一位。关爱与教化要持续不断、不知疲倦。这不是休息之时，而是利用有利时机继续前进之时。成功是一定的，而且我们有获得成功的实力，但我们不能坐享其成或放松努力，因为这一时段不会持续太久。最后，在获得大的成功之前，更重要的是要大家共同分享功绩与赞誉。

反对卦：33. 遁（撤退）





水
穿入
陆地
并让陆地相连。

Water
penetrates the
lands
joining them.

20. 观（观想）



坤下巽上

要想理解他人的行为，就要以公正为原则。

风环绕着大地，吹向隐秘的地方，给大地以动力。大地与风同行，而风在其风景中找到憩身之处。大地为风提供了一座小山，以让风对大地进行观想。

观想通过两种途径来实现：一是对他人进行观想以理解他们的行为，二是观想省察我们的内心以发现我们自己的行为是否恰当与公正。两种途径都含有我们必须明白和遵循的内在法则。在对他人进行判断时，我们常常根据我们自己狭隘的准则进行判断，而这些想法往往不全面，也不公正。在向内进行观想时，在试图了解我们认为我们蒙受的不公正时，我们倾向于把我们的道德品质估计过高，夸大针对我们的不公正行为。我们抱怨生活，抱怨命运，抱怨我们的处境或地位，而没有意识到生活总是以“种瓜得瓜，种豆得豆”的方式回报我们。不管是哪种情况，我们的观想都是有缺陷的。通过选择高处，站在小山的顶上，我们能够观察到上面的天空和下面的人们。同时，我们也成为我们周围的人进行观想的主体。这样，我们就与风景及他人的生命融为一体了。

这是对我们所处的环境及我们自身进行分析的时候。我们仍然不知道要选择什么样的道路，因为我们缺乏一种全方位的视野。我们必须从头开始。首先，我们必须以一种开放和正确的心态对我们周围的人进行观察，不是据其言，而是观其行。其次，我们必须对他人的行为产生的结果是否成功进行考察。最后，我们必须确定摆在我们面前的阻力是由外在的障碍造成的，还是由我们自身性格的弱点造成的，还是由我们错误的行为造成的。草率行事会导致失败。只有通过集中注意力进行观察与反思，我们才能够得出成功所必需的综合又全面的观点。

反对卦：34. 大壮（权势过度）





接触
天，
你在
对人观想。

Touching
the sky,
you contemplate
man.

21. 噬嗑（决定）



震下离上

面对大的障碍时，要下定决心将其克服。

大山高昂着头，目空一切，但山顶的雷声解除了这种紧张。大山在召唤我们，但我们的进程受到阻滞。雷声是看不见的，但其威力可以穿越山体而传到山谷之外。

我们面对的是障碍，我们有几种选择：躲着它，绕过它，逃避它，或是摧毁它。但我们还可以决定用力毅然将障碍物切断并到达障碍物的对面。生活中的障碍可能发展不快，但有时，由于我们忽视了它们并缺乏防止其发展的力量，它们就会变得不可收拾。当障碍开始出现时，轻柔的、公正的、决断性的举措就能将其克服。但当它们已发展成熟，而且其高度和厚度已挡住我们的视线时，就需要用大的行动才能克服它们。有必要深入到障碍物的中心，然后从其对面出来。没有必要把障碍物摧毁，但我们必须深入其内部，以找到穿越它们的出路。一旦我们成功到达大山之外的山谷，障碍就会被抛在我们后面。

我们必须采取迅速而有力的行动。火的明晰之性与雷的力量可以帮助我们。首先，我们必须认清导致障碍物发展到如此地步的因素。对形势的正确评判有助于我们为解决问题而采取恰当的步骤。一旦我们明白了障碍的根源，并且确定采取正确的方向，我们就应勿失良机，毅然决然地采取行动。犹豫不决会导致失败。柔和的行动不能穿过大山。我们的同伴可能对我们的行动产生疑问，但如果我们受他们的影响而后退哪怕只是一步，我们就会前功尽弃。我们必须加紧前行以达到山的另一面，观看就在我们前面的新风景。

反对卦：48. 井（水井）





你可以避开
大山的吸引。
但你要
切过大山。

You may avoid
its attraction,
but
cut through it!

22. 贲（润饰）



离下艮上

要想拥有巨大的财富，你首先要润饰自己的性格。

大山垂降，大火则避难于大山内部。二者处于一种平衡状态。大山调和着大火燃烧的力量而照亮其内部，从而变成一种美。当大山含藏金子时，就会在太阳下闪闪发光，而太阳将其光辉藏于内部以保存其本性。

在生活中，我们有时会拥有很多——财产丰厚、有权有势、影响巨大——并且认为我们自己很幸运。这并不是一种消极的情势，除非其性质及丰厚与我们的功绩不相称。外在的形象和美当然很重要，但必须是内在的性格之美的反映。暗藏的金子是看不见的，但它能够反射太阳光而让大山闪闪发光。危险在于花费如此多的功夫去追求地位和喝彩以至于舍弃自己的本性。目标清晰再加上循序渐进，可以让我们同时获得外在的富有和内在的平和。

细节在这个时候至关重要；这不是采取大规模行动之时。文饰必须通过小的积累一点一点地获得。我们绝不能把这一进程看得如此繁琐而跃步急促地到达最终的目标。含有金子的大山之美丽与价值在其内而不在其高；如果我们修养并润饰我们的内心，我们的举止和行为也会像金子一样闪闪发光。

反对卦：47. 困（枯竭）





人文之山啊，
什么是
你隐含的
深深的秘密？

Human mountains,
what deep
secrets
do you hide?

23. 剥（解体）



坤下艮上

如果你被困于混乱之中，镇静可以助你破局。

突兀而陡峭的山会遭受剥蚀，最终坠为平地。只有那些平顺宽厚的山才经得住时间的流逝和大自然的冲击。

过于强大的力量并非一日所积，也不会永远存在。其内在的动力会将其分解，扫除道路上的一切。如果说了解力量积聚之机制很重要的话，那么，知道其弱点及分解性就更为重要。这是含有重大危险的时期，因为剥落解体会使我们的周边不稳定并模糊我们的判断。有形的因素不能给我们以帮助，大地的奉献和大山的力量对我们来说也无济于事。只有镇静才能够经得起毁灭性的自然的力量。

镇静可以帮助我们免遭剥落解体性力量的冲击。我们处在危险之中，我们首要的冲动是逃离。如此行动只会使情况更为糟糕，因为它把我们聚集地和栖身地带走。失败似乎迫在眉睫。我们首要的任务是保护自我和憩息之地，以免被我们周围的骚动所感染。大地的接受包容性可以让我们适应这一形势，我们知道这一形势是暂时的。最重要的是要保持我们内心的平静，这是我们在剥落解体的形势下的惟一退路。如果我们能保持我们的整体性，并坚守住阵地不动摇，胜利终将是属于我们的。

反对卦：43. 夬（决断）

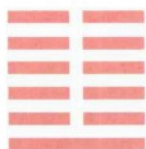




那参差不齐的
山顶
向我们显示着
失败。

Its jagged
peaks
show us
defeat.

24. 复（返回）



震下坤上

如果你的努力尚未结出果实，宁静并做好准备可致成功。

冬至是静养的时节。冬雷的能量藏于地下，并在这一休养的时节重新生长，为春天的复苏作好准备。大地为下一次的收获准备好了犁沟，种子在集蓄力量以露出地面。

错误是由不遵守法则而引起的。如果违背身体法则，就会生病；如果违背心灵法则，心灵就会疯狂。种子发芽有其严格的法则可循，如果违背这些法则，就会阻碍其生长。所有的运动皆根据其本身的规律循环往复；揠苗助长并不会使这一循环的速度加快。我们必须记住我们撒的是什么种子，从而确定让它按我们的预期目标发展。我们一定会得到收成之果，它将成为新一轮开花结果的开始。但我们一定要做好庄稼一成熟就进行收割的准备。如果拖延得时间太长，它就会变得干瘪而失去生机。

返回根本需要心态平静，而平静的心态又以确知什么将会发生为基础；返回根本还需要在问题变得不可收拾之前为纠正问题作好准备。我们不必用早熟的行为消耗自我，因为我们已经知道，在正确的时段采取恰当的行动才会富有成效。现在是等待和休养的时节。另外，如果我们以前的一些行为已经产生了我们不期望产生的不良后果，那就是应该返回到道路的起点的时候了；在道路的起点我们的想法仍然很纯正。在等待大地无限的丰硕之果再次到来之时，我们必须休养生息和纠正偏差。

反对卦：44. 姤（相遇）





通过耕作，
在无限处
超越
自我。

Ploughing,
you traverse
yourself
in the infinite.

25. 无妄（意想不到的）



震下乾上

如果你陷于单调乏味，就要拥抱意想不到的情况。

道路单调乏味，由光秃秃的石灰石所包围。在路的急转弯处，假扮成独立巨石似的巨雷避难于天空，天空和蔼地欢迎着巨雷。这块巨石似乎与周围的陆地没有连在一起，但不管怎样，由于其意外的出现，它也是整体的一部分。

率性而为与自然而然之举是如此强大，以至于能够确保成功。率真之所以闪耀光亮，是因为它源自智慧而没有恶意。尽管人们通过运用图谋不轨或阴谋诡计有时能够前进得更快一些，但其内在的矛盾最终会把结果弄糟。但率真之成功永远都不会被外在的形势所摧毁。属于我们的东西会在一个好的时机到来，我们必须作好意识到它会到来的准备，因为它也许会意想不到地到来。如果我们不能意识到它而错过它，它就不会在路的下一个转弯处令我们感到惊奇地再次出现。

我们的行动必须自然而然，相信我们初始与内在本性，而不是追求远不可及的目标。这时，我们必须召唤力量与清晰的头脑。如果成功比预期来得迟，力量就是耐心等待成功所必需的。清晰的头脑是意识到并接受意外的事情所必须的。意识到行动与接受的确切时机也是至关重要的。如果我们关注前面的障碍物和路的拐弯处，慢慢旅行，并享受壮丽的风景和生活，成功就会意想不到地突然到来，且装扮得十分辉煌。而且，因为我们已经做好了接受它的准备，意想不到的事情将与风景天衣无缝似地融为一体。

反对卦：46. 升（上升）





道路，
转弯，
突然之间，
它已在那里。

The road,
a turn,
and, suddenly,
it is there.

26. 大畜（大的积蓄）



乾下艮上

当看起来一帆风顺时，要蓄势而行，灵活应变。

天躺在大山中央的正上方，并受到高山的爱抚。天空围绕着大山，但仍然保持着其自身的平静。过了一会儿，大山擎起了天空，它们的力量合为一体，休息于这一风景中。

这是拥有非常之力量的时段，但必须将其控制住以防其退化为压制性的力量。前进的道路上似乎没有障碍，而且我们的力量似乎是用之不竭的。这种印象或感觉会把我们带入这样一种危险，那就是，为了尽早达到顶峰与天际而采取草率且复杂难行的行动。我们必须顺着这一道路一步一个脚印地前进。山在天之上并阻住其力量。与之相类似，人生中也有必定成功的情势，但只有我们采取合乎时宜的行动才有可能成功。顶峰没有乌云，但山坡很陡。我们无疑最终将会到达山的顶峰，在那里，我们的展望将会延伸至无垠的风景之外。

我们拥有力量和清醒的头脑，是采取行动的时候了。在这些特别的时段里，任何事情都取决于我们人格的力量。我们必须走走退退，严格控制住我们下一步前进的步伐；每一步都要渐次而行，而又坚实有力。我们不能通过直接的进攻来排除困难。这样只会消耗我们的能量，致使我们被甩在后面落入山谷，重新开始攀登。通过持续的一张一弛，我们的能量就会生长得如此顺利与强壮，以至于任何事物都不能阻挡我们前进的步伐。这种情势令人迷惑，因为运动并不是沿着一条直线前行，而是前后迂回，一进一退，直至实现目标。一旦我们到达顶峰，就可以触摸到天空。

反对卦：45. 萃（相聚）





天
在它最喜爱的座位——
大山上
休息。

Heaven rests
on its favorite
seat:
the mountain.

27. 颐（营养）



震下艮上

如果你嫉妒受到他人支持的人，就要学会欣赏自己的自由独立与力量。

春天，隆隆而出的巨雷在大山深处休憩。只有大地的沉静才能够使种子发芽，开花，结果。因此，是雷的运动创生了万物。大山接受其内部的运动，并保持安静。

营养是能量之源，而营养不良或不健康会导致疾病。营养是我们的盟友，因为它为我们提供了完成大事业的力量；它还是理解他人的钥匙。在研究他人时，我们必须观察他们所选择关注、照应和培养的是人格的哪些方面，以及他们选择忽视的是人格的哪些方面，不管是物质层面的还是精神层面的。我们可以自己为自己提供营养，或者由他人为我们提供营养。有时，一个自己照顾自己的自由人可能会嫉妒由他人提供照顾的人，但不是因功绩而来的容易得到的东西是要付出很高代价的，而且时候一到就必须偿还。只有在不损害我们的独立性的情况下所接受到的东西才会滋养我们的身心。

现在是我们照顾我们自己之时，不只是在身体营养方面，还包括人格修养。这一阶段是为行动作准备的，但首先我们必须聚集所必需的力量。最重要的是我们要获得物质上的独立和坚强的态度。我们不必嫉妒那些享受通过依赖他人而获得舒适条件的人。如果我们运用雷一样的具有穿透性的判断，我们就会觉察到为这种依赖性所要付出的巨大代价。接受真诚的帮助不是一件坏事，但只有当这一帮助不让我们承担自由受到限制的风险时才可以。这种帮助将会增强我们的力量，并使我们向他人提供营养成为可能。

反对卦：28. 大过（大的过度）





大山
既接受，
同时也
给予。

The mountain
accepts,
but it also
gives.

28. 大过（大的过度）



巽下兑上

当处境有外部压力时，从小事做起亦可达致成功。

巽为风，也有“入”、“木”之象。在此，湖泽之水淹过树木。因而这是一个非常时期。水势大而盖过树木，但风是无孔不入的，因此树木经得起水之淹没，仍然保持平静直到大水消退。

有时候形势会以不可阻挡之势压垮我们的力量和多年的努力。我们会得出结论认为我们所有的努力已付之东流，我们丧失了希望。在崩溃和洪水泛滥之时，可见的东西已被淹没。但树木有穿入大地的属性，而风有消散的属性。树与风一起能够抵御洪水并升至水面之上。目前我们不能期望完成大的作为，但我们决不能让目前的形势把我们击败。我们肩负的担子过重，因为我们在事业之初的基础还不牢固。不充分的开始永远不会带来成功。

重要的是要保持宁静，并作好与困难作斗争的准备。这可以通过努力完成小事、日常事务来获得，可以通过完成有助于我们集中精力面对现实而远离命运给我们带来的震动与艰难之计划与习惯等来获得。同时，我们必须分析失败的原因，并考虑新的开始和新的目标。这样，当洪水消退时，我们就可以开始作出新的努力——就像具有穿透性的树木将会重新透出水面而自由生长一样。

反对卦：27. 颐（营养）





大水漫延。
树木挺立。

Water covers.
Wood withstands.

29. 坎（水，深处）



坎下坎上

当被困难所包围时，要走阻力最小的道路。

水能够适应所有障碍，流入孔穴并淹没它们。深渊与跌落都不能阻挡它前进的步伐。它处于最低的势位，但它的连续不断性甚至可以腐蚀高大的山脉，而且其力量是不可战胜的。任何事物都不能改变它的禀性，因为水接受万物而不抵抗。

在我们的生活中，危险似乎是一种负面的情势，但有时它能够磨炼我们的意志，并使我们的智慧变得敏锐。面对危险时，重要的是要保持我们内在的本性，而且我们只有通过运动才能完成这一点。水只需要上升一点点就可达到容器的口边，但这种上升仍然是一种运动。持续不断的水流形成其不可征服的力量。水适应于任何孔穴，运行、跌落并流入甚至最深的地方。水的适应性使它成为最强大的因素。

危险无处不在，我们必须通过适应环境而不被阻滞、并将它绕过。形势是外在的，因而不能影响我们的内在本性。明智的做法是，集中我们所有的力量来克服我们所面临的障碍，而不是越过它，也不管摆在面前的障碍有多大。就像水一样，一旦我们已克服障碍并注满下一个孔穴，我们就能够继续前进。没有耐心就不会获得成功。在克服危险之前，我们必须等待形势达至其自然界限之时。最后，必要的是要找到适应形势的办法，绕道而行、放慢脚步并分析阻力最小的道路，以避免危险。这不是承担大事业之时；真正的成就只有在危险被抛在后面时才能获得。

反对卦：30. 离（火，附物之物）





水的
声音
在深处
回响。

The sound of
water
reverberates
in the depths.

30. 离（火，附物之物）



离下离上

对所处形势或人进行评价时，要运用智慧并和之以善意。

火产生亮光，附属于它所燃烧的东西，并具有所燃之物的形状。因此，火同时具有适应性和照明性。它可以是太阳或闪电。是光线照亮了大地的每一角落，而且它又从大地升起。火象征着改造。

光明通过知识、文化、艺术和灵性来显现，但这种光芒决不能超过其内在的本性。火依附于木材，但也消耗木材。在燃烧的时候，火提供光和热。然后，火会变成余烬，又会在新的木材上重新燃起。智慧与生活的关系即如火与木材的关系。清晰的判断是必需的，但是如果过于犀利与冷酷就会毁坏生活。我们必须认识到自己的过错，并以慈爱之心理解他人的过错，从而启发而不是毁坏生活。如果我们保持好余烬，火就会继续温暖我们的家。

必要的是要分析我们所处的确切位置，因为这一分析将决定我们的行动。智慧应该照亮我们前进的道路，而反思则必须先于行动。有时障碍会看起来如此强大以至于模糊我们的判断力。但在这上下皆火之时，我们的教化能力和领悟能力非同一般。这是一种巨大的优势，但我们必须温和地运用我们明晰的判断。过于热烈会使我们麻痹。一旦我们对所处形势完成了彻底的考察并得出正确的结论，我们就要坚实有力地决然而行，坚持不懈，直到成功。只有坚持不懈，火焰才会继续提供光亮。

反对卦：29. 坎（水，深处）





火焰
升腾，
余燃
留存。

The flame
leaps
maintaining
the embers.

31. 咸（感化）



艮下兑上

要想感化他人，首先要改正自己的不足。

大山留出一块空地作为湖泽的安身之处。湖泽给大山以湿润，山泽之气互通互补。因为大山已为湖泽留好房间，森林才得以在湖泽岸边茁壮成长。

要想感化影响他人，我们可以利用引人注目的事迹或英勇壮举，但真正能感化影响他人的是人格的力量与整体性。当人的地位低下时，感化的力量来自谦和。当处在高位时，感化影响他人的力量则来自人们对其人格的肯定。要想感化影响他人，我们必须首先清理出一片空间，根除或缩小我们自己性格中的不足及其外在显现。最后，如果我们寻求对他人产生影响，我们的行为必须正当而适度，以确保产生持久的影响，并使其连续成为行为适中的指导。

如果我们地位低下而想感化影响他人，我们就不应该追求那些我们希望感化的人；我们必须控制住自己。我们也不应轻易屈就于他人的影响。不管在哪种情况下，要想成功，我们都必须在培养自己的人格方面下工夫，排除干扰性影响，增强我们的意志并坚定我们的目标。这种形势有利于我们联合众多不同的人，我们或者跟随这些人，或者指导他们，但要根据具体情况而定。不管是哪种情况，我们都会成功。此时是放弃会阻碍我们进程的偏见或先入之见的时候。旧的事物必须消失，为新事物创造出一片空间。

反对卦：41. 损（减损）





森林在生长
只是因为
大山
为其创造了空间。

The forest grows
only because
the mountain
makes a space.

32. 恒（持久）



巽下震上

面对逆境，坚定目标是开启成功之门的钥匙。

雷和风代表运动，它看起来好像与恒久的概念相反。在风的吹动下，雷的力量在大地上回响，而风又从雷声中聚集力量。二者互动，它们的来来往往——连续的变化——是恒久性的循环往复的一部分。

恒久不是一种惰性或静止状态，而是由运动所决定，而运动存在于一种持续的更新和强化状态中。能够在运动之中感知恒久会帮助我们在逆境中持之以恒。我们会遇到障碍或尴尬的局面，但我们必须坚持前行，而不休息。恒心会产生正面或负面影响。如果把恒心用在有价值的目标上，影响就是正面的。如果把恒心附于优柔寡断的状态或结果为失败的行为上，就会削弱我们的人格并把错误扩大。只有经过勤勉的人格修养，我们才会享受到持之以恒和正当成就的果实。

现在我们不能停滞不前，因为在成功之前必须持之以恒。但我们必须接受一个事实，那就是，运动有其自身的规则并遵循它自己的轨道，渐次有序地、不间断地结束与开始。我们不能跳跃前行，也不能优柔寡断。优柔寡断永远不会带来成功。采取行动后犯错，犯错后再纠正，比根本就不行动会更好。如果我们构想出一个具体的行动方案，即使只能看到最后结果的一部分，我们也必须行动。但是在追求错误的行动时，坚持不懈就意味着需要停下来，以重新指导我们的行动沿着一条新的不同的道路前进。如果经过持久地积聚力量，我们能够前进，后退、折回而不损失实力或影响到目标的稳定性，我们就会实现我们的愿望。

反对卦：42. 益（增益）





雷
把它的力量
借给风
风因此而能持久。

Thunder lends
its power
to the wind,
so it can endure.

33. 遁（撤退）



艮下乾上

当被不良之人或不良之境包围时，撤退是惟一明智的选择。

大山升向天际：天向后撤退，给大山以空间。天不拒绝对山的庇佑——因为天是无所不覆的——但天与山保持一定的距离。微笑着离开的时候到了。

撤退是吉利的，特别是当一个人被不良之人或不良之境包围时。重要的是不要混淆撤退与逃跑。在撤退期间，我们为了接下来的前进而重新组合我们的力量。而逃跑的时候，阵地就舍弃给敌人。这里存在刚毅与软弱之分。在撤退的时候，我们决不能停下来往后看，这是人们经常犯的错误。在前进的时候，向后看则意味着只是一时的阻留。而在撤退时向后看则是灾难性的，它会夺去我们清晰的判断，因为我们会看到敌人马上就要追上我们了。撤退的原则很简单：说声再见，拔腿就走。

我们绝不能犹豫，因为光明已经过去，天正在退却，阴暗正在到来。我们已没有选择的余地，而撤退是必需的，因为战斗只会消耗我们的力量。部分的撤退不是放弃，而是做出最后努力之前的实力恢复。最危险的时刻发生在当撤退的时候已经到来、而我们却被阻在后面。想从我们这里得到利益实惠之人会试图阻留我们，但我们的宗旨不允许我们耽搁。我们必须诚挚地与他们处理好关系，因为现在是撤退之时。只有通过正确的行动，天才会在某一天在山的上空占有其应有的位置。

反对卦：19. 临（来临）





天空
微笑着
对大山说
再见。

Smiling,
the sky says
goodbye
to the mountain.

34. 大壮（权势过度）



乾下震上

当拥有过度的权势时，只有协调平衡才会带来成功。

雷的力量超过其限度，而从巨雷获得能量的大山几乎已侵入天空。我们不能攀上这么高的山峰，但如果我们在山底踌躇过久，我们就会变得麻痹懈怠。大自然可以支持人类，但也可以毁灭人类。要靠我们的双手来抑制大山的超过限度。

在显现出来之前，权势是从内部发展的。当权势积聚到过大的地步时，就会产生阻力；只有当它基于正义时，才能让人容忍。有道德和正直的行为将会授予权势；压制性的权威会把它带走。刚强的行为也可以赠予权势，但只有用平衡来调和才行。如果我们坚持不放，我们仍然可以保留我们的位置。如果我们超过形势所允许的限度，权势就会压制我们。只有当大山为巨雷留出逃避的空间时，天才会庇护大山。这样，巨雷令人震撼的声音才会消逝。

我们浑身是劲，有能力干一番大事业。我们内心充实并具有决断力，这会令我们永往直前地去排除障碍，而没有停下来分析其后果。由于认为我们有足够的能量，我们就不加珍惜而将它挥霍，而当我们注意到能量不复存在时，已为时过晚。交出权力并不容易，因为权力能把我们放在有利的位置，而他人则服从我们的意志。但我们需要知道权力的限度之所在，以免我们被自己过度的权势消耗掉。但犹豫不决不是最好的选择，因为我们拥有干大事业所需要的能量。如果我们能保持平衡协调，我们就能够获得任何人都无法夺去的权力与威望。

反对卦：20. 观（观想）





如果大山
继续上升，
就会变成
压制性的力量。

If the mountain
continues to rise,
it will become
oppressive.

35. 晋（进步）



坤下离上

在寻求新的视野时，要接受所有的机遇以大步前行。

太阳升起，被其内在的火所照亮，大地也闪闪发光。起初，一道道田地还在阴暗中；到了正午，风景便在阳光下光彩夺目了。

清晰的判断，就像太阳照耀万物一样，需要一种认识到正当事物、并揭露不正当事物的能力。有时，过于锋利的目光会让我们离负面的因素——即黑暗藏身的地方太近；但如果我们不想看到整个的真实，我们就会以失败告终。现在是进步的时候。判断照耀着前面的道路并帮助我们快速而成功地前行。然而，前进的时段也暗含失败的种子。我们可能没有利用好这一有利的时机；或者因为我们没有认识到其有利性（特别是当它紧跟在我们生活中的困难时期之后时），或者因为我们暗藏着一种错误信念，便认为这一时期会无限地持续下去。进步会采取最没有阻力的道路进行，但就像火一样，它会以燃尽自己而告终。所以，当它仍在持续时，我们必须享受其壮丽的光辉。

我们必须离开我们当下的环境而寻找新的视野。我们拥有清晰的判断力，不要怀疑我们获取成功的能力。有许多大陆可以去看，有许多条道路可以前行，但时间有限。如果我们现在不采取行动，这一机会就有可能一去而不复返。坐下休息、享受舒适的时间是会到来的，但现在是利于前行的时候。我们必须轻装而行，因为只有轻松的心态才能为长途跋涉提供力量。除了进行简单的修整以外，我们亦不应徘徊在河岸边休息。前进可以随时结束使命，并从地平线上消失。

反对卦：5. 需（等待）





在地平线上
太阳现出光彩
唤醒
喜悦的大地。

The sun shines
on the horizon
awakening
the joyful earth.

36. 明夷（光明被遮蔽）



离下坤上

当面对强大的黑暗势力时，要注意韬光养晦。

大地遮蔽了太阳，但光线仍在山根处闪现。光线隐含着宝藏，只有我们继续保持警觉，宝藏才会在山边被发现。

形势充满了危险，我们只有极其小心并运用智慧才能脱险。负面的力量占支配地位，与之对抗将是徒劳的、毁灭性的。正面与负面力量的主要区别在于，正面力量有其存在之根，而负面力量则是无形的。这就形成一种矛盾：正面力量会把所有情势——不管是正面的还是负面的——转变为正面的事物，而负面的力量则会增强负面的情势，使它们更具毁灭性。敌对与反抗形成负面力量。其后果是，正面的力量必须从负面的力量中隐退；它不必要消失，而只是引退以掩藏实力。当负面的力量失去其势力时，正面的力量可以重新前进，并以其初始的光芒闪耀发光。

我们应该利用火的光明作出清晰的判断，以对形势作出确切的评估。首先，我们必须搞清楚试图毁坏我们的负面的人或力量。但我们决不能暴露我们的发现，保守这一秘密至为重要，我们要继续保持我们的习惯和行为方式。这样，负面因素就不会遇到其兴风作浪所需要的阻力。然而，我们必须尽早离开破坏性的环境。熟人可能会认为我们在夸大其危险性，因为他们看不到。但我们绝不能改变我们的道路。我们必须放弃这一形势，也不与它进行抗争。有利的形势将要到来。吸取了在黑暗中度过的经验教训以后，我们必须撤退到山顶上的阳光下，等待有利形势的到来。

反对卦：6. 讼（冲突）





在黑暗中
休息。
黑暗
有些事情告诉你。

Rest in the
darkness.
She also has
something to tell you.

37. 家人（家庭）



离下巽上

要寻求增强与家庭成员之纽带关系，就要以柔和之心来树立自己的权威。

风，显现为热，热源于火。而热产生力量。风扇动火焰并维持余烬，家和家庭成为劳累一天后的避风港。

家庭是组成社会的基础。在家庭环境中所学的东西，会反映到个人、集体和社会的层面。家庭的支柱之一就是道德人格的修养，这一点学校教育是无法复制或替代的。另一个支柱是实施权威。如果权威是以武断的方式强制实施，其结果就会适得其反。如果不实施权威，其结果将会是优柔寡断和性格柔弱。必须树立合适的榜样。任何缺乏内在一致性的命令都无法执行，也不能由某个极具权威的人强行制定并命令他人服从。平衡协调，在保证家庭的每个成员都享受到劳动果实方面发挥着首要作用。

首先，我们必须培养受到别人尊重所必需的实力和权威。如果不是基于始终如一的行为而只靠说话，将会是白费口舌。在形势危险难以控制的情况下，热心管教比懒惰或漠不关心的效果会更好。持续实施权威也是必需的，直到达到我们的目标为止；尔后，我们的表现应该变得柔和，就像微风维持余烬一样。我们必须注意平衡我们的收入与支出。家庭的成功在于维持正当的平衡。家庭中的孩子也应该学会怎样分配物资并限制支出；这一训练在家庭扩大期间会增强家庭的实力和凝聚力。当所有这些条件都具备时，火就会在炉子中找到一处永久的位置，照亮这个家。

反对卦：40. 解（解脱）





耕作过的
一小块一小块
土壤——
人类。

Small patches
of ploughed
soil:
mankind.

38. 睽（敌对，乖异）



兑上离上

当冲突性的力量模糊你的判断时，就要恢复宁静和平衡的心态。

火在泽上预示着冲突。水和火永远都不会相容，且保持各自的性质。只有当烹饪之火用于煮水之时，二者才会和谐相处。泽上火是一种干扰性的影响，它会改变湖泽的性质和颜色。不过，只有火才能够让它恢复其蔚蓝色。

当力量处于冲突状态时，要想完成大事是不可能的。我们只能在细枝末节上下功夫，这也很重要，因为大事业的成功在于从小处开始。冲突性的力量模糊我们的认识，并妨碍我们对最终目标的感知。如果冲突是唤醒我们避免自满或淡漠，冲突就是正面的；但当它让我们感到迷惑时，它就是负面的。关键是要确定有没有可能让冲突得到解决，或此形势是否源于不可调和的矛盾。如果是后一种情况，我们就必须根除导致敌对的根源。要做到这一点，我们就需要公正和客观之人的帮助，因为形势十分混乱而我们的力量又不够充分。如果我们能够揭开冲突的根源所在，就有可能让湖泽返回其本性，并让湖泽之水恢复至蔚蓝色。

这时，我们决不能试图进行大的举动。冲突的力量模糊了我们的思想和判断，让我们在做重大决定时产生错误。敌对是不应该允许得到强化的；因此我们应该柔和而谨慎地做事。然而，如果冲突如此紧张以至于弄得我们不知所措，而且我们的判断像被阴云遮蔽住一样，就有必要将此形势搁置一段时间，离开它，以恢复宁静与平衡。尔后，当适合行动的時刻到来时，我们已从情绪上作好了准备。在我们迷惑期间，也可能有持客观态度的人前来帮助我们采取明智的行动，即便如此，我们也要保持克制。最重要的是不要让忧虑压垮我们。如果我们保持镇静，敌对就会顺着它自己的道路远离我们而去，我们就会重新获得安宁。

反对卦：39. 蹇（阻塞）





火
把湖泽
引向其神秘的
源头。

Fire
leads the lake
towards its mysterious
origin.

39. 蹇（阻塞）



艮下坎上

面对主要障碍，要修养自己性格，不要偏离原先的方向。

在大山前聚集的乌云因受高山的阻挡而停止。大山不能收缩，从而让乌云飘过。大山坚固地挺立，一动不动。只有释放重负之后，乌云才能到达阳光灿烂的山坡。

在人间，阻塞可以发挥保护性的作用。它逼迫人们后退，让人们此时在无法越过的障碍面前不要做无用之功。暴风雨不是一蹴而成的，它有它自己的发展速度，当乌云聚满时，雨自然会降落。尽管阻塞会妨碍实现即时目标，但它也借给我们最终实现该目标所必需的力量。阻塞可能来自内部，也可能来自外部。当面对外部阻塞时，除了等待，我们别无选择。对于来自内在的阻塞，我们必须努力根除我们自身人格中的不足。面对困难，人们容易抱怨命运、他人或一生中我们所处的形势。与之相反，我们应该内观自我，考察我们的所作所为是否有可能促进了障碍的发展。如果我们因此而受到责备，我们会永远等待下去而看不到前面阳光灿烂的山坡。

我们有两项任务需要完成：在等待外在障碍消失的同时继续前行；继续朝着根除我们自身不足的目标前进。我们必须决然而行，以免当乌云释放为雨时，发现我们自己仍然停留在山脚下。攀登山峰的行动应当慢慢进行，但必须快速根除我们的不足，从而以怀着轻快的精神继续前行。前进的道路是曲折的，我们会进进退退，我们会绕过危险而行，我们或者会停下来休息直到危险的形势已经过去。但我们绝不能失去目标，即山的顶峰。当乌云释放为雨后，山对面充满阳光的风景就会灿烂地出现在我们面前。

反对卦：38. 睽（敌对，乖异）





如果他们
失却重负，
他们就会看到
太阳。

If they became
weightless
they would see
the sun.

40. 解（解脱）



坎下震上

在寻求从不良的过去得到解脱的同时，绝不能放松努力，直到最终实现目标。

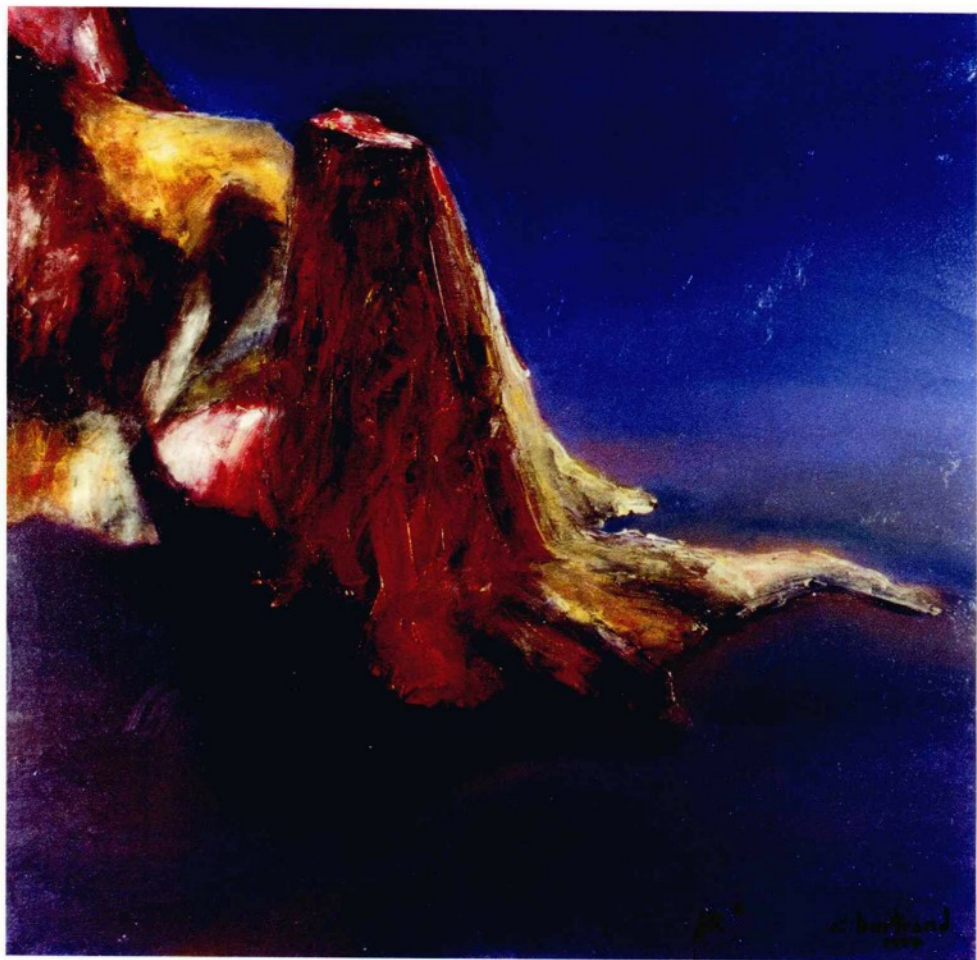
雷从形如大山的世界撤退。它不再影响大地，只影响紫色的大海。在此，雷从战斗中退回休息，释放其力量，并从高处对风景进行观想。

解脱之时是快速解除紧张的一种体验。我们不再反控和责备过去，我们已从所有的负面影响中解脱出来。这不是自我满足式地对胜利进行吹嘘的时候，因为还有许多任务需要完成。在寻求解脱期间，有两个我们会被诱惑放弃努力的关键时刻。一是刚刚开始的时候，这时，我们的事业似乎过于庞大而有压倒之势。一是结束的时候，这时，目标已在眼前，胜利看起来如此简单以至于我们想松口气。尽管第一种情况看起来最令人畏惧，而最后的努力则是最艰辛的，因为我们的力量已消耗殆尽。在冲向最后的目标时，我们绝不能松气。只有坚持到底，我们才会在紫色的大海之上的高山顶上找到栖身之处。

我们需要付出巨大努力以抹掉过去所有的消极因素，并致力于进入一个新的时期。但我们在接受不符合我们本性的、非同寻常的援助时，要特别小心。如果我们接受别有用心或具有自利之动机的人的帮助，将来我们就会为此付出昂贵的代价。因此，我们必须拒绝接受这种帮助。然而，如果他人希望与我们走同一条道路而不是别有用心，我们就必须接受他们。从紧张中解脱出来可以为我们提供区分欺骗与诚心诚意所必需的、富有洞察力的判断。最后，当目标就在眼前时，为了最后的冲击，我们必须稍事休息，对我们的力量进行重组。这样，我们就能够从过去中解放出来，从而平静地思考未来。

反对卦：37. 家人（家庭）





在孤独中，
它看着
下方
紫色的水。

In solitude,
it regards
the purple
water below.

41. 损（减损）



兑下艮上

当个人利益受损时，就要寻找一块你能够自由行动的地方。

湖泽在山脚下休息，但大山有压倒之势，汲取湿润以丰富滋润自我。湖泽萎缩，变得越来越小；后来，它不声不响地占据了山的一个空穴。

减损本身无所谓好坏，这要看它发生于何地。如果我们减损不足而增益有余，就会制造不平衡，从而扩大不足与有余之间的差距。而如果我们损其有余，就会达致一种平衡。模糊我们判断的不恰当的快乐和激情享受、人格的不足以及所有轻浮和不必要的事与行为，都必须受到减损。但是，当减损的效果使我们失去判断力或自由时，这些效果就会变成负面因素。我们必须明白这种减损，它可以伪装成增益而出现。譬如，想支配他人的人可能会使他人相信，他为了换取安全而在生命的某些方面做出了让步。强调关注安全会让我们忘记我们在交换中所放弃的东西。不能意识到减损的本质将会导致灾难。湖泽的例子就是意识到欺骗性而在山的空穴中保持不动。

当我们处于依赖性的位置时，这就是一种个人的减损，我们可能会有一种义愤、忿怒或造反的想法。而现在，障碍远远超过我们的力量，我们必须寻求一个我们的行动不会受到干扰的安全之地。我们可以在家庭氛围或能分享我们想法的朋友那里找到这种安全。我们要避免自我哀怜和愤恨。即便是在减损期间，我们仍然可以用鼓励或激励的办法来帮助我们周围的人。一旦减损之时已过，湖泽之水必然能重新升到天空并凝视山峰。

反对卦：31. 咸（感化）





因为变得越来越小，
它能够捕住
山的
空穴。

Growing small,
it can seize
the mountain's
hollow.

42. 益（增益）



震下巽上

在努力迈向大的成功时，精力充沛、灵活应变和坚持不懈，缺一不可。

风与雷相互支持、相互增强。风携带着雷而行，并通过传送雷声而获得力量。风与雷一起传播到又宽又广的地方，穿越大地上的空穴和缝隙，直到愉悦地互相道别。

这是一个十分有利的时段，但不会持续太长时间。在增益之时，只要我们抓住机会并机智地采取行动，就必定能够成功。成功不会提供第二次机会；机不可失，失不再来。当人世间的正确行为受到大自然的支持时，不管是命运还是偶然事件，均无法阻挡增益的力量。我们必须注意不要吹嘘我们的成功或试图回避他人，害怕通过分享我们的成功我们就会失去它。增益之时依我们的功绩而来，因而是不能够从我们这里取走的。

我们宜于抖擞精神、立即行动，同时保持随顺与灵活。这是前进与行动之时。现在，对我们来说任何事情都有可能完成，因为我们拥有实力和灵活性。似非而是的是，如果我们自满于已获得的成就，我们就会减少努力而堕入隋性。我们决不能只吃老本，而要在增益持续之时坚持不懈。对我们来说，休息期将要到来。现在我们必须向风学习，它柔和地分享着雷的力量并毫不费力地越过大山。

反对卦：32. 恒（持久）





风会让你
晶莹剔透。
雷
让你穿越障碍。

The wind will make you
transparent.
The thunder
will let you in.

43. 夬（决断）



乾下兑上

如果时机需要决断而行，就要运用判断力并谨慎行事。

湖面几乎触及天空，只有一条细线将它挡住。当湖水升至天空以与暴风雨相合时，暴雨就会随之而至。如果大自然能够容纳它，雨就是有益的，如果形成洪水泛滥，雨就是有害的。

形势的变化已酝酿了好长时间。长时间以来出现的紧张即将达至其限度而得以解散。这是积极的一面。然而，当前的形势是内在抵触和充满矛盾的，因为敌对的力量在进行战斗以排除和消灭对方。当问题的双方被清楚地界定时，作出判断并不是难事。就像湖水越过其自然界限而溢出一样，不负责任的行为会导致混乱，会扭曲我们的观念、并阻碍我们为了成功所做的努力。行动的可能性走到尽头，我们就不得不等待，直到形势变化到允许我们对要走的道路有一个清醒的认识之时。

首先，我们必须仔细考虑摆在我们面前的两种相互对立的选择。其次，我们必须决然而行，但又必须慎重。就像导致湖水溢出的最后一滴水一样，即便是一个小小的错误，也会把我们带到离目标很远的地方。行动还应该以正义为指导。也许会有人批判我们如此谨慎地前行。我们将被迫转弯并面对强力或暴力之困难，而几乎意识不到一个错误的行动会让我们前功尽弃。决断之时能够带来巨大的成就，但需要小心地对平衡点——即湖天之分界线——进行定位。

反对卦：23. 剥（解体）





难道不是天
隐藏着
湖水的
深度？

Isn't the sky
hiding
the depth
of the lake?

44. 姤（相遇）



巽下乾上

要奔向自己的目标，就要与有能力的人进行联合。

天在高空，不能直接影响大地。因此，天用吹在大地上空的风来发布命令。风在大地上无所不在，所以每个脚落都能感觉到天的影响。

扩展和运动能把我们带到很远的地方，这取决于我们所选择的周围的人。这是一个影响和快速发展的时期；这时，可以让能够帮助我们的人以及能够摧毁我们的人聚在我们周围。风的力量是不可见的，但它总是产生可见的效果。同样，正面或负面的影响可以导致联合或分裂。人有选择彼或此的自由。这时的智慧在于迅速而敏捷地前行，以找到可以和我们获得理想目标的有能力的人。

这一过程一旦开始，就不可阻止；这就是为什么不让不良之人获得领导位置至关重要。即使他们看起来没有恶意或无害，我们也必须揭露他们，为此我们需要可靠朋友的帮助。我们联合起来的力量可以产生洞见和快速反应能力。但我们不能与消极面进行全面的对抗，而应该找到一条绕过去的道路，继续沿着这条路前行，直到找到真正属于我们的道路。

反对卦：24. 复（返回）





大地
总有空穴
让风
从中穿过。

Always there are
hollows in the earth
through
which the wind can pass.

45. 萃（相聚）



坤下兑上

要寻求与他人联合，就要发现可以分享你的见识的人。

如果湖里聚集太多的水，湖水就会溢出而泛滥。但是，如果湖泽处在众多河流的汇聚点上，水就会蜿蜒地混合在一起并平静地流向其目的地。

在开展一项新事业时，首要的是要得到与我们志趣相投的人的帮助。摆在我们面前的有两种选择：成为相聚的中心或与他人相聚。要成为相聚的中心，我们就应该拥有真诚的品性和内在的力量，而且我们必须能够确定一个让大家都能获益的目标。如果不具备这些条件，最好是以另一个人为中心而寻求成为聚众中的一员。我们可能会发现我们周围的人与我们的观念不一致。在这种情况下，我们就应该从该团体中离开而寻求与他人相聚。或者我们会发现我们孤立无援，而我们周围的人已与他人相聚。那么，我们就应该努力成为该团体的一部分。不管在哪种情况下，时间都是极其重要的。一旦相聚的时机已经过去，它就不会再次到来。

我们不缺乏决定做什么所需要的因素，而一旦我们做出一项决定，就要遵守这一决定的规则。如果我们想成为相聚的中心，我们必须具有说服他人的能力而坚守我们的信念。如果我们选择追随他人，我们就必须明了他们的功绩并为共同的事业伸出援助之手。如果处在中心位置，也许寻求权力和影响的人就会涌向我们。为确保事业向前发展，我们绝不要理睬他们。如果我们追随他人，我们绝不可别有用心或希望获利，而且一旦目标已经达到，我们所得到的回报应该与我们所付出的努力相符。然后，就像在大地上蜿蜒前行的溪流一样，顺利的前进将会是属于我们的。

反对卦：26. 大畜（大的积蓄）





即使它在拐弯处
隐藏起来
你也会
发现它。

Even if it hides,
at a turn
you will
find it.

46. 升（上升）



巽下坤上

要想上升，就要灵活、谦恭。

树木生长在远处。它们不妨碍我们，随风而动，弯向障碍。树木携带一种信息：在大自然中，适者生存。

上升之时是有利的，但必须根据自然法则而行。就像树木顺应情势、随风摆动一样，人的事业的发展应该灵活随顺地慢慢前行。我们要通过渐次、坚强的努力塑造我们的意志。长时间的、连续的、小的努力将会获得非同寻常的结果。与此相类似，小过如果得不到根除就会铸成大错，阻碍我们奔向目标。如果我们遵循上升之规则，我们的事业就会开花结果，润饰我们的人生，就像树木美化风景一样。

前进必须通过小的、连续的步伐完成。我们应该适应形势并保持灵活机动，以克服意想不到的障碍。现在是上升之时，进步之时，我们可以无所畏惧地前行。然而，我们必须抵制让胜利冲昏头脑的诱惑。我们的力量是有限的，不能浪费于傲慢自大。开始和结束是上升时期最艰难的阶段；因为前者需要适应性，而后者需要伴以谦恭。如果二者都能成功获得，我们就能够听到树木所携带的信息，而且将能平和地在树阴下休息。

反对卦：25. 无妄（意想不到的）





或许
树
就是
信使吧？

Is perhaps
the
tree
a messenger?

47. 困（枯竭）



坎下兑上

当精疲力竭且不能行动时，就要保持镇静，并修养自己的性格。

当湖泽失去水时，湖床就会干枯。为使湖泽恢复，大自然的循环就需要时间。蒸发把水送向天空，凝聚成云，云飘流在山巅，不能通过。当浓云变得过于膨胀时，就要释放大雨，给湖泽以新的生命。

生活中的逆境既可压垮我们的精神，也可把我们抛入绝望；反过来，它们也可以用以充实我们的内部力量。当我们面对逆境时，任何事情皆取决于我们的态度。逆境会有其内部原因或外部原因之根源。外部原因易于识别，我们会抱怨命运不济或他人对我们所犯的错误的。这些事情超出我们的控制。内部原因更难于发现，因为它们源于判断失误，但此类问题可以得到解决。与所有逻辑相悖的是，我们常常坚持与命运抗争，试图改变外部的情势，而此时要改变我们的性格或观念则容易得多。智慧寓于等待有利形势回归和通过性格修养来作好自我准备之中。

似非而是的是，这种形势具有相当的正面性，因为它迫使我们在等待我们的力量恢复或形势转变之时要保持镇静，更新力量，以锻炼毅力。这不是与命运进行抗争之时，而是与之相配合之时，因为命运总是奖励那些知道如何坚持等待的人。如果我们感觉受到压迫，我们就必须保持镇静，直到形势得到解决。如果我们精疲力竭，我们就必须休养生息。即使我们不知道令我们不安的源头在哪里，镇静自若的判断也会照亮我们前进的道路。这样，我们就会恢复属于我们的东西，而释放重担的乌云将把湖泽所失去的水归还给湖泽。

反对卦：22. 贲（润饰）





某些东西
在云中
失去踪影。
其他一些东西又出现了。

Something
is lost
in the clouds.
Something else appears.

48. 井（水井）



巽下坎上

要想生活得有意义，就要深入了解自己，与他人分享自己的成就。

这些因素次序失调：水在上而风与木在下。只有把水从井中汲出时，水才升到上面而滋养人类。植物汲取水分以滋养其根部。因此，只要有水的地方就会有树。

井中之水象征赋予我们日常生活以意义的最深层的愿望。有时难于觉察到其意义，因为我们缺乏恰当的平衡、内心的平静和为意识到它而进行的反省。就像井中之水一样，意义不存在于表面，而存在于深层，而且有必要把它汲至明亮之处。如果我们能成功地把它汲出，它就是取之不竭的，并一直升到上面来。知识的获得既不是单调的，也不是乏味的。我们通过与各种各样的人进行交流，在与朋友的相聚中及在从事令人愉悦的活动中，发现知识。知识是深刻的，也是无止境的，就像井中之水；一旦我们得到了它，它就会帮助我们达到目标。

重要的是要鉴别出我们真正想要的是什么，然后我们就应该寻找得到它的途径。这两种目标需要反省和细致的思考，但现在我们拥有获得二者的智慧。一旦道路已经确定，而且也明白要采取的途径和结果，我们就要精神饱满并热情奔放地付出努力。柔和之力不能把水汲出，我们的运动必须快捷有力。一旦将水汲出，我们就必须与他人共同分享。这样，我们的精神就会轻松，我们也会自由地与我们所选择的同伴一起享受成功的喜悦了。

反对卦：21. 噬嗑（决定）





为什么
树木
总是随向
河流？

Why do the
trees
always follow
the river?

49. 革（更新）



离下兑上

如果需要实现根本的变革，就要采取行动，否则就会永远错失良机。

上面的湖泽之水在熄灭下面的大火。相冲突的力量处于相互摧毁的位置。只有当大火具有创造性并把自己假装成龙时，才能逃脱掉。

根本的变革需要非同寻常的措施，但在采取行动之前，我们必须问我们自己三个问题。一是我们计划要做的是否真的有必要而且我们是否已经穷尽其他所有解决此问题的可能性？二是我们有没有应对这一变革所需要的办法？三是我们是否对最后的目标有清醒的认识？此外，还有主宰我们所采取的行动的规则。正确的时机是必须的；仓促行事将会导致失败。完成这一目标所采取的措施必须正当，明了。如果想成为领导者，我们就必须赢得跟随者的信任，而不寻求个人利益；而且只有当目前确无其他选择时，我们才必须走向变革之道。根据这些原则而行就会获得成功。

如果确定变革是惟一的选择，我们就必须注意不要因为操之过急或犹豫不决而犯错误。现在是沉着而决然行动之时，否则此机会将会永远失去。由于形势紧迫，我们必须能够向周围的人清楚地解释我们所做决定的理由，因为他们可能要在危机关头发挥作用。我们还要注意小的细节，这种额外的小心有助于我们最终的前进。只有在确实必要时我们才前进。来自过去的消极的因素已被根除，我们面对的是一个崭新的未来。这就是为什么我们在甩掉旧的不足和消极因素之重负时需要谨小慎微的原因。只有当它们被除掉之后，巨龙才会得到解脱而自由地飞翔。

反对卦：4. 蒙（童年之蒙昧）





鲜红色的
巨龙
通过水而
逃遁。

The scarlet
dragon
escapes through
the waters.

50. 鼎（鼎器）



巽下离上

要想帮助他人，你自己的人格就必须像火一样闪耀。

风木在火下，以让火继续燃烧。当木材用完时，火就会熄灭，食物也就不能备好。鼎坐于火上，为所有人提供食物。鼎在阳光下光彩夺目，成为聚于它周围的人的中心。

就像井的用途一样，鼎的作用在于它能靠近人们的生活。人们通过喝从井中汲出的水而解渴，通过吃火上之鼎所备的食物而解饥。如果我们拥有某种十分贵重的东西并想与他人共用，我们就必须首先考虑将要面临的危险。如果我们不慎把鼎弄翻，它就不能为我们提供给养了。在没有清洗干净之前，就永远不应该使用它。在放进新食物之前，必须清除腐坏变质的食物残渣。此外，如果鼎耳脆弱而其中的食物过多，在移动时，它就有可能破裂。但如果鼎耳是用质地坚硬而有光泽的玉做成的，此鼎就能被安全地移动，为聚于它周围的人提供丰富的营养，鼎也就会像火一样发出光芒。

如果我们想与他人共用某种贵重的东西，绝不能粗心大意。我们必须着重保护贵重之物，因为它们一旦丢失，就不可挽回。我们必须注意细节，一开始发生的次要的事情有可能会成为主要的事情。这是去故取新之时，是倒转局势之时，要放下包袱以便获得完成手头任务所需要的机敏性。重要的力量要运用得恰到好处，过多的能量会把事情弄糟。最后，让鼎的性质发生变化的创造性行为是必需的，这样才能让它为人们既能提供物质营养，又能提供精神营养。

反对卦：3. 屯（初始之困难）





在阳光下
它将
熠熠生辉
如玉一般。

It will shine
in the sun
like
jade.

51. 震（雷，骚动）



震下震上

当逆境以不可阻挡之势到来时，就要镇定地撤退至你所熟悉的场地。

雷以令人敬畏的力量从大地的中心爆发而出，但作为春天的使者，它也是令人欣喜的原因所在。雷的光辉壮丽全部通过大山展现出来，雷声带着回音在整个空中回荡，反过来，大山也因之变得更为雄壮，几乎触到了天。

首先，雷声唤起敬畏，其力量震动人的心扉，促成一种心灵上的转变。存在三个方面的骚动：天之骚动，指雷；命运之骚动；由我们的心或情绪导致的骚动。在本卦中，骚动源于命运，它令我们的环境不安，令我们的心神不宁，导致我们无法镇静自如。逆境继续不衰，不让我们的的心情有恢复平静的时间。我们可能会越来越泄气，甚至在试图找到一条出路方面感到绝望。我们对未知的领域感到惧怕，而骚动又令我们的判断模糊不清。然而，命运保护那些保持镇定并利用逆境来磨炼意志、振奋精神的人。

人常常很难面对命运的猛烈打击。我们的第一反应就是反抗；随之而来的则是绝望，它会侵蚀我们的意志。这是一场不平等的战斗。我们必须从由骚动所搅起的情绪混乱之漩涡中脱离出来，撤退到我们所熟悉的场地，以恢复我们的力量。现在我们不能孤军作战或冒险去不熟悉的地方。休整之后，我们才能够继续前行，但现在我们必须等待。如果等了一段时间之后，命运继续与我们作对，我们就绝不能直接与此形势作对，而代之以对已被毁坏的东西进行补救。如果我们如此行动，骚动就会从我们身旁走过而不对我们造成破坏，而且当它变弱时，我们可能已经到达山的顶峰。在此至高点上，天会以其强健之美呈现在我们面前。

反对卦：57. 巽（风，柔和；木，穿透）





雷，
是大地力量
在夏天的
呈现。

Thunder,
the force
of the earth
in summer.

52. 艮（山，静止）



艮下艮上

当被情绪左右时，要用逻辑与理性控制情绪。

两山相接。山之所以强大是因为它代表着静止。如果两山相接，静止的力量就会变得不可战胜。

静止在此代表的是情绪和性格之静。这一点是很难达到的，因为心之思绪比心之推理更快、更不稳定。真正的静并不是指静止不动，而是一种让我们获得内心安静、并根据形势及时应对的一种理性运用。有时，比我们更具坚强意志的人会把我们拉到他们的道路上去。其他时候，我们可能会否认身心所渴求的安慰。我们应该避免两种情况。我们可能会对表面情况进行回应，相信与他们进行简单的交谈与交际会拯救我们的情绪混乱，但这将会收到相反的效果，让我们的生活更加浮躁不安。如果我们花点时间对两座肩并肩相联的山进行沉思体悟，将会发现我们内心所渴望的静止之境。

重要的是要控制情绪而用逻辑进行推理。我们必须注重现在，因为将来是不确定的。外面的形势现在并不特别重要，问题是要对将来的行动作出准确的判断。我们不应该受他人的影响，而应该躲开焦躁不安的人。这并不意味着我们必须孤立自己。只要不让我们分心而离开我们的目标，这样的朋友就可以与我们为伴。现在，我们正在聚集所有能量和静止之境，这是把我们维持到可以采取行动之时所必需的。

反对卦：58. 兑（湖泽，安宁）





大山
安静平和
高耸
幽深。

High and
deep
in the peace
of its silence.

53. 渐（逐渐进步）



艮下巽上

要想获得持久的成就，就要稳步慢行。

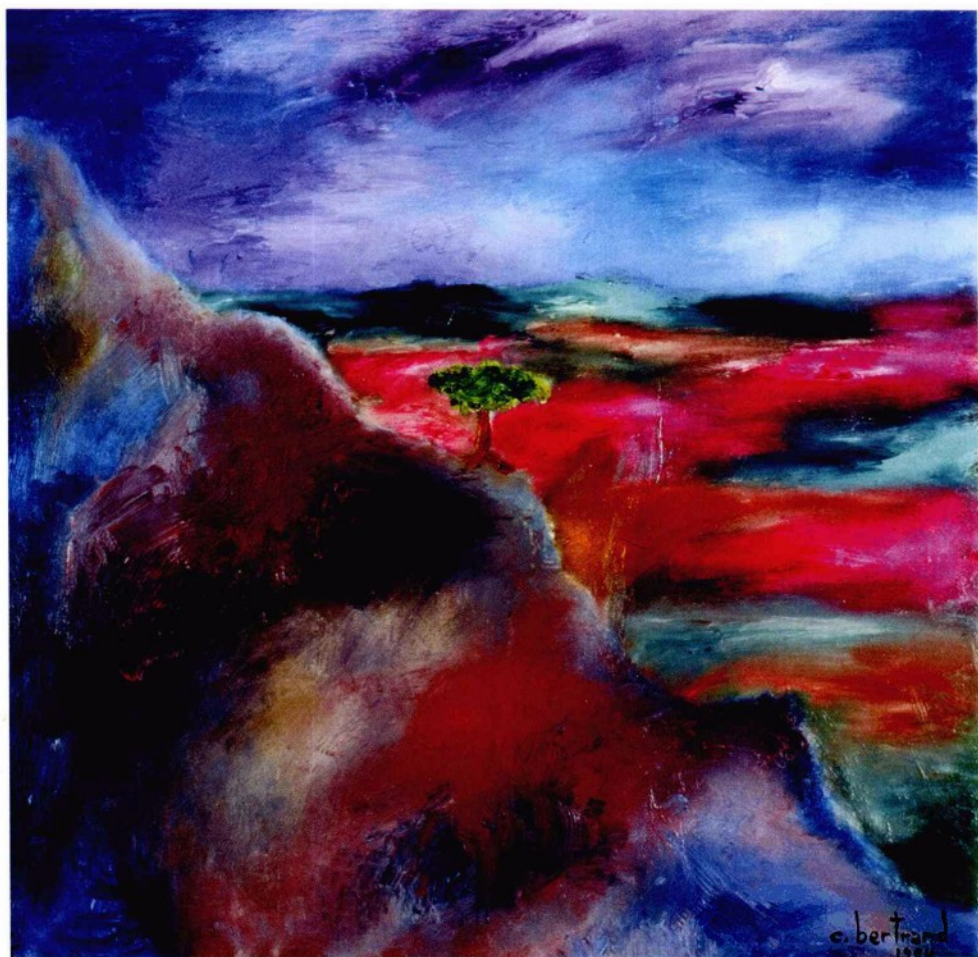
山上惟一的一颗树在远处即可看到，且其孤独局面影响到大地。树长得很慢，根扎得很深，这给它以强大的力量。山谷下的人们向上观看这棵树，并把其意象留在心中。

成长是逐步获得的：大山的力量和静止与树木柔和的穿入相连。这种柔和能够克服所有的阻力。在人世中，人必须首先强化自己的性格以改变自己的处境。内在的危险在于，性格的慢慢改变因其难于觉察到的进步而不会受到欣赏。但持之以恒比命运更为强大，并会以通过合适的途径所得到的成就来作为回报。我们的前进不是匀速的，有时快，有时慢。在慢速期，我们绝不要失去耐心并试图决定行动，而要让形势以其自己的步调发展。最后，刚强与灵活会创造出令他人乐于进行思考体悟的意象。

我们必须经历几个阶段。首先，我们必须通过意志力强化我们的性格。起始阶段最为困难。不理解我们的发展的人会试图阻碍我们进步，我们绝不能让他们影响我们。我们要谨慎，但同时保持灵活，适应正在变化着的形势。这些形势会向我们显示出办法。到该休息的时候，我们必须与他们分享我们的成果。于是，山上这棵孤独之树的永恒的美就会为我们所有人而闪耀。

反对卦：54. 归妹（出嫁的少女）





山上
孤独树
属于
人的灵魂。

The lonely tree
on the mountain
belongs to the soul
of the people.

54. 归妹（出嫁的少女）



兑下震上

在与人结合时，一定要保持你内在的本性。

湖泽披上盛装并从雷的力量中得到增强。在把其回荡之声推向山谷之前，雷从湖泽那里获得安宁，并在大山中徘徊。活力十足、强健有力与安宁、平和是相互对立的，但所有力量都处在休止状态。

在男人与女人的结合中，必须达成一定的原则，两人才能永远亲密无间。这种结合必须建立在平等和相互尊重的基础上。有各种各样的结合：一是基于共同拥有一种相近的理念和感觉而结合，一是为了达到一定的目标而结合。不管寻求哪种结合，相互结合的双方都绝不能以结成同盟的名义而放弃自己的自由和内在本性。在人生中，我们有可能和与我们的性格截然不同的人建立关系。只有当这种结合可以丰富我们的情感和智慧时，我们的力量才能相得益彰，以达成功。

重要的是要分析我们真正想要的东西是什么，并且只跟随我们所尊重及我们认为其目标有价值的人。如果不能满足这些原则，我们就必须远离他们，即使有人批评我们自我孤立，也要如此。最重要的是要保持我们内在的本性。如果我们不是处在将要成为联合之中心的位置，我们就必须与他人联合，把联合起来的努力指向一个好的事业。在生活中只有两种选择：接受或改变发生在我们身上的事。我们可以选择雷的力量或湖的安宁，但必须根据目前的形势而定。这样，我们就可以取得平衡，雷的回声就会被湖的安宁平息下来。

反对卦：53. 渐（逐渐进步）





雨
从天上落下，
休憩
在大地上。

Falling from
the sky,
the rain rests
on earth.

55. 丰（盛大）



离下震上

如果知道种子和源头，你就可以创造自己的命运。

震为动，火为明。现在，火在山上，但它随时都会出现而造成破坏。雷的威力与火的能量可以达到一种平衡，这会让它们所向披靡。

盛大时期未必非有个结束不可，因为人通过努力可以无限地将其持续下去。但是，形势继续有利之时段可能会导致态度松懈，这是一种逐渐放松的努力和过于乐观的态度，它会让形势依其固有的矛盾而变坏。这将会导致毁灭。与此相类似，已取得重大权力的人如果不将权力用于正义和高尚的事业，他就会被帮助他登上权力位置的同样的力量推翻。这是我们必须运用洞察力去弄明白内在相互矛盾的力量，并培养必要的实力以维持所致盛大之境的时候。因此，不能允许火从山上逃离。

首要的是分析现在的形势以便预测未来。如果我们知道我们已种下什么种子，我们就会知道将会收获什么果实。上升阶段我们所付出的关爱也会对收成产生决定性作用。这是决然而行之时，可进行一种大规模的行动，因为现在我们拥有足够的干大事业的能量。我们不会被障碍压倒，而会轻易地越过它们。但我们不能为我们的胜利自吹自擂并过于骄傲，因为成功不会长时间与傲慢的人在一起。我们必需对将会导致衰落的任何自满的信号保持高度的警惕，并为避免这一灾难准备好付出双倍的努力。最后，我们不必对盛大之境的短暂性感到失望。如果我们愿意为盛大之境而奋斗，我们就一定能够把此境永远地维持下去。

反对卦：59. 涣（涣散，融化）





大火
在云雾缭绕的
山峰之巅
停留。

At the peak,
surrounded by
clouds,
the fire rests.

56. 旅（行者）



艮下离上

要想在异域获得成功，就要谦恭待人。

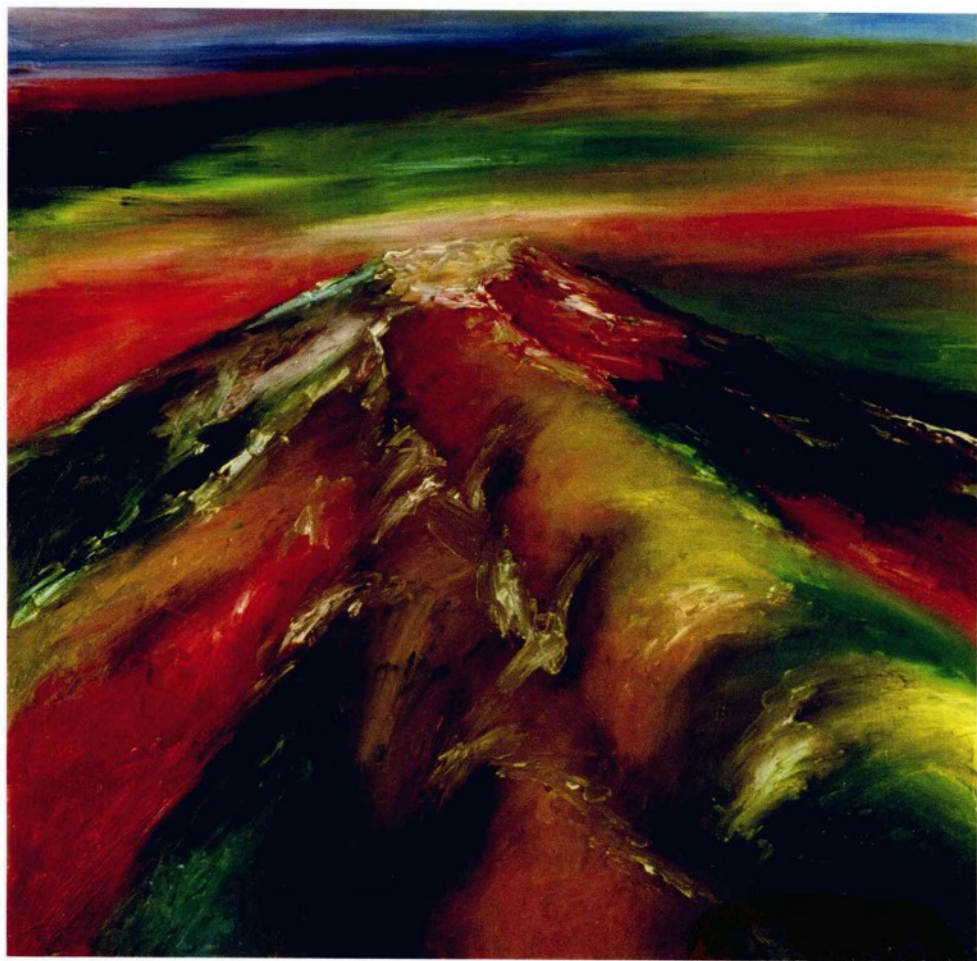
这是大山因农夫燃烧山坡而发出红光的时节。这一现象是暂时的。只有存在附着之物时，火才能逗留在山上。然后，它会沿着山坡下降，寻找另一座山峰。火的行为是无有止息的变化。

如果我们想在异域安家，我们就可以在此学会采取正确的态度。我们处于谦虚的位置，我们必须通过自重和尊严来对此进行弥补。常犯的错误是对所处形势作出肤浅的评价，并试图通过逗乐的方式讨好他人，但这种做法会遭到他人的蔑视。一个新地方的居民可以在他们自己中间取笑逗乐，但他们不愿意接受陌生人也这样做。同样，母亲理解并接受她自己的孩子的缺点，但不会容忍他人指出这些错误或拿这些缺点开玩笑。

必须让自重和尊严支配我们的一切行动，因为玩笑和愚蠢的行为是不会受到欢迎的。只有当我们在异国他乡度过一段时间并完全融入到当地的生活与习俗之后，我们才能够对事物进行评头论足。首要的是我们对新的文化和习俗要有一个深入的了解，并适应已发生变化的情势。在克服阻力时，谦虚和谨慎是必不可少的。最后，我们过去所获得的成就并不重要。在此，我们要从零开始，别人只能根据我们目前的行为对我们进行评判。火没有自己的形状，但它根据它所附之物的变化而变化。因此，经过融合，我们就能够找到我们的位置和家园。

反对卦：60. 节（限制）





各种色彩
沿山坡下降
从风景中
横过。

Colors descend
the slopes
to traverse
the landscape.

57. 巽（风，柔和；木，穿透）



巽下巽上

要想改变目前的处境，就要柔和并坚持不懈。

风跟随着风，柔和而连续。同样，木以树的形式从大地中长出。无形的风吹拂着水，融化着冰雪，并通过森林窃窃私语。这就是风的力量。

逐渐的努力如果是连续不断的，就会比更有力或猛烈的行为成功的几率更大。确定目标很重要。来自各个方向的一阵阵的风缺乏力量，但如果它们聚在一起，朝同一个方向吹，就会成为不可阻挡的力量。在强烈运动之时，要保持集中是很困难的，但风的坚持不懈与柔和的无孔不入会帮助揭露隐藏着的东西，从而强化我们的判断力。但是，就像风能促进我们完成简单的运动一样，负面的人会根据风的这一属性得出同样的办法，因而我们的工作就会受到干扰。我们必须依靠清晰的判断和有力的行动根除负面的影响。事物的运动可能对我们有利，也可能与我们作对。任何事情都取决于我们的行动。

正确的行动要依我们所遇障碍的性质而定。要逐步改变所处的处境，我们的行动就应该柔和而连续不断。如果某一障碍比较复杂或困难，我们就要运用穿透性和适用性工具。但如果障碍是不可逾越的，而且我们又缺乏克服它的实力，我们就必须绕它而行，这样就可以保存我们的实力并避开毁灭性的漩涡。如果我们能成功运用木的穿透性，我们就可以洞察其周围的形势与秘密。最后，我们绝不能忘记最终的目标。一旦达成一项决议，我们就不能屈服于令事物瘫痪的怀疑。如果我们把所有的努力都集中于同一个方向，我们就会变得像风一样。任何事物都无法阻碍在森林中自由吹动的风的通道。

反对卦：51. 震（雷，骚动）





森林发出
声响
那是树的
哨音。

The voice of the
forest,
the rustle of
trees.

58. 兑（湖泽，安宁）



兑下兑上

要克服不良影响，就要培育宁静和内心愉悦的性格。

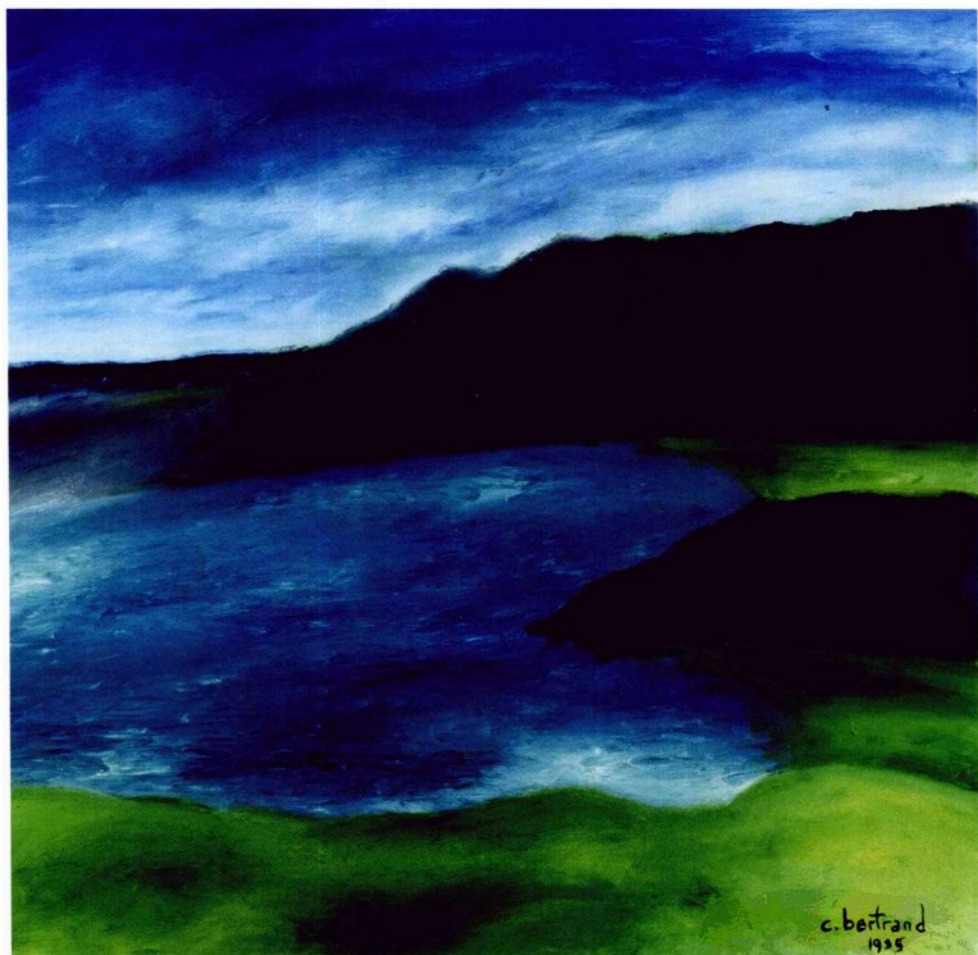
湖泽宁静地躺在那里，但蒸发能把湖泽之水送向天空。两个相连到一块的湖泽保存它们的水体，蓝蓝的波涛抚慰着湖岸。

任何力量都不如愉悦与宁静强大。恐惧也会很有威力，但只会产生短期的效果；而且因为恐惧所固有的矛盾性和强制性，它最终会摧毁那些用它来控制他人的人。愉悦没有内在的矛盾，它总是正面而积极的，而且它的出现有可能令人毫不费力地获得成功。危险在于表面的宁静所导致的软弱。因此，外部的柔和不一定要济之以内心的刚强和坚定。我们可能会发现，在安乐时期，他人将会寻求依附于我们，与我们分享他们不应得的成就。我们必须对这种危险提高警惕，并远离这种人及其影响。只有持之以恒才能帮助我们克服这种危险。这需要付出努力。

首先，我们需要培养内心的愉悦。内心愉悦的状态比仅仅娱乐要深刻得多，而且通过它我们能够更好地掌握我们的命运。但是，拥有愉快和无忧无虑的性情这一简单事实不能保护我们不受消极因素的影响。有时开放的性情既容易受正面影响的伤害，也容易受负面影响的伤害。我们必须防止负面的影响，因为它会使我们偏离我们的目标而最终毁掉我们的事业。因为这是行动柔和宁静之时，我们要避免与具有强壮与支配性性格的人为伍。他们的腐蚀和低落会影响我们的机能，干扰我们的宁静。我们有必要走阻力最小的道路，以到达湖泽岸边的憩息之地。

反对卦：52. 艮（山，静止）





蓝蓝的
宁静之波
描绘着
湖岸。

Waves of blue
serenity
paint
the shores.

59. 涣（涣散，融化）



坎下巽上

寂寞难耐时，要破除僵固与严苛的判断。

冬天，水结冻成冰。山上的积雪越来越深。当春天的柔风到来时，寒冰就会融化，而雪水则从大山上流下并注入湖泽。它们相互呼唤着对方，相互向对方微笑示意。

当生命力以强烈的愤闷郁结于内心时，只有柔和才能将其消解。但如果不首先消除与其相对的内部及外部障碍，我们就不能实施柔和。僵固不化和以自我为中心会让我们孤立。我们或许认为创建一个外壳会保护我们免受折磨，但这种外壳会令我们更僵硬，并让我们更为远离我们的目标。有时我们会对自己和他人作出严苛的判断。这会导致厌恶或不相信人类和脾气暴躁。判断必须出于中和、公正，绝不能出于愤恨。如果我们借鉴风的柔和性，根除令我们孤立的性格与形势，我们就会越过所有的障碍。

这是根除弱点与消解症结之时。我们必须甩掉消极因素以开辟一个新的壮大时期，去故而取新。首要的是根除所有令我们疏远他人的内心的障碍。这需要作出努力，因为我们所构筑的外壳会起很大的阻碍作用。僵固不化不会令我们免受折磨，相反，它还会给我们带来痛苦。过去的就要让它过去，春天不会浪费任何时间来留恋冬天。春天忙于大地的发芽、开花，并让水回归它们所属的湖泊。

反对卦：55. 丰（盛大）





风
微笑，
雪，满怀期望，
回应。

The wind
smiles,
and the snow, solicitous,
responds.

60. 节（限制）



兑下坎上

面对不可逾越的障碍，要限制自己的奋争之心，并找时间休息。

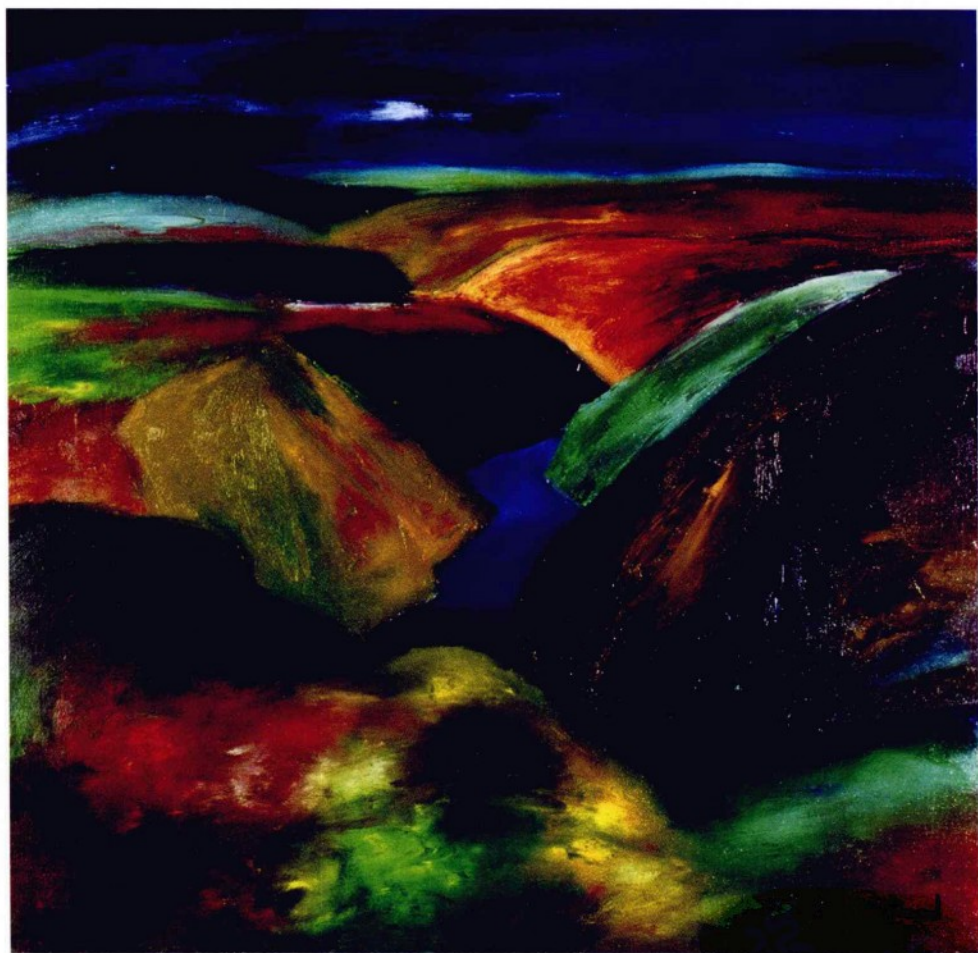
湖泊坐落于山中的小空穴中。如果超出其容量，水就会淹没周围的陆地。因此，它必须被限制在它所处的地方。湖泽之水触及到天的一天终有可能到来。

限制看起来会阻碍我们前进，而且我们会把它视为负面的限制。但限制也可以发挥正面的作用：它可以防止我们与现在我们无法克服的障碍作对。因此，我们不要为无用的战斗而消耗我们的实力，而必须为取得更重要的目标做好准备。限制也有其受限性。我们所不愿受到的限制，也不要施加于他人，因为这样做就会在运动中设置一个将会反过来针对我们的毁灭性的力量。限制应该是自然而然的，就像水一样，在溢出之前只升到其容器的顶部。如果我们濒于精疲力竭的边缘，限制可以帮助我们增强我们的力量，因为它让我们停下来并恢复我们的能量。一旦形势变得有利，我们的力量就会得到解放，任何障碍都无法阻碍我们成功。

人们难以弄明白这时应该如何行动，因为人的本性把限制看作负面因素。但在这种情况下，限制会为我们提供通往目标的惟一通道。面对不可逾越的障碍，我们不能发动因绝望而铤而走险的正面战斗，我们必须限制我们的行动，平静我们的心态。沉着、限制会促进实力的增长。这样，当形势有所变化时，我们就会有备无患。我们还应该准备好为他人设置限制，尽管这些限制不应该太苛刻或僵硬。我们最终会看到成功之路，我们也会拥有完成目标所需要的能量。然后，我们就不再有任何疑惑。深处的水就会自由地升到天空。

反对卦：56. 旅（行者）





如此之深
虽然不能
触到天空。
可是……

So deep
it can't
reach the sky.
However...

61. 中孚（内心的真实）



兑下巽上

要想获得正面的影响，就要遵循埋在你心底的信念。

只有湖里的波纹能表现出风的存在，因而使无形的东西成为有形的东西。风在水上轻柔的表演和湖的宁静表现形成了风景梦幻般的美。

现在是发现内心真实的时候。没有人能彻底地了解自己，且那些进行自我分析的人也常常犯错，因为人们对别人比对自己倾向于做出更严厉的判断。惟一可以确定的是行动及其结果。我们可以看到湖上的波纹，但看不到风；与此相类似，我们必须对他人的行为进行观察，以了解其真实所在。保持内心的真实要求我们的情绪不要依赖于他人。这种依赖会夺去我们的自由及解决我们所面临的问题所需要的清晰的判断。我们不能靠借来的真实来生活。如果我们依赖他人作为我们的重心，我们就会被抛入不间断的烦恼。内心真实的力量是如此强大，以至于即使在我们静止不动时，其影响也会从我们内心传播出来——就像声音在水上回荡至远方一样。

在我们试图了解他人时，我们必须借鉴风的温和之性，以仁慈的态度对他们做出判断。同时，我们必须用敏锐的判断来理解我们自己行为的结果。如果我们在这些方面的努力能够成功，我们会完成我们最终的目标。有必要杜绝情绪的依赖。这并不意味着我们必须保持孤立，但我们不应该被影响到忽略我们埋在心底的信念的程度。在保持以我们的目标为中心的时候，我们有可能会遇到困难，而且我们的行动可能只取得小的结果。但我们绝不要担心。波纹会在蓝色的湖泽中永远传向远方。

反对卦：62. 小过（小的过度）





只有几许
波纹
让这蓝色
弯弯曲曲。

Just a few
waves
curling the
blue.

62. 小过（小的过度）



艮下震上

要实现将来的重大目标，就要守在你所熟悉的环境，并谨慎前行。

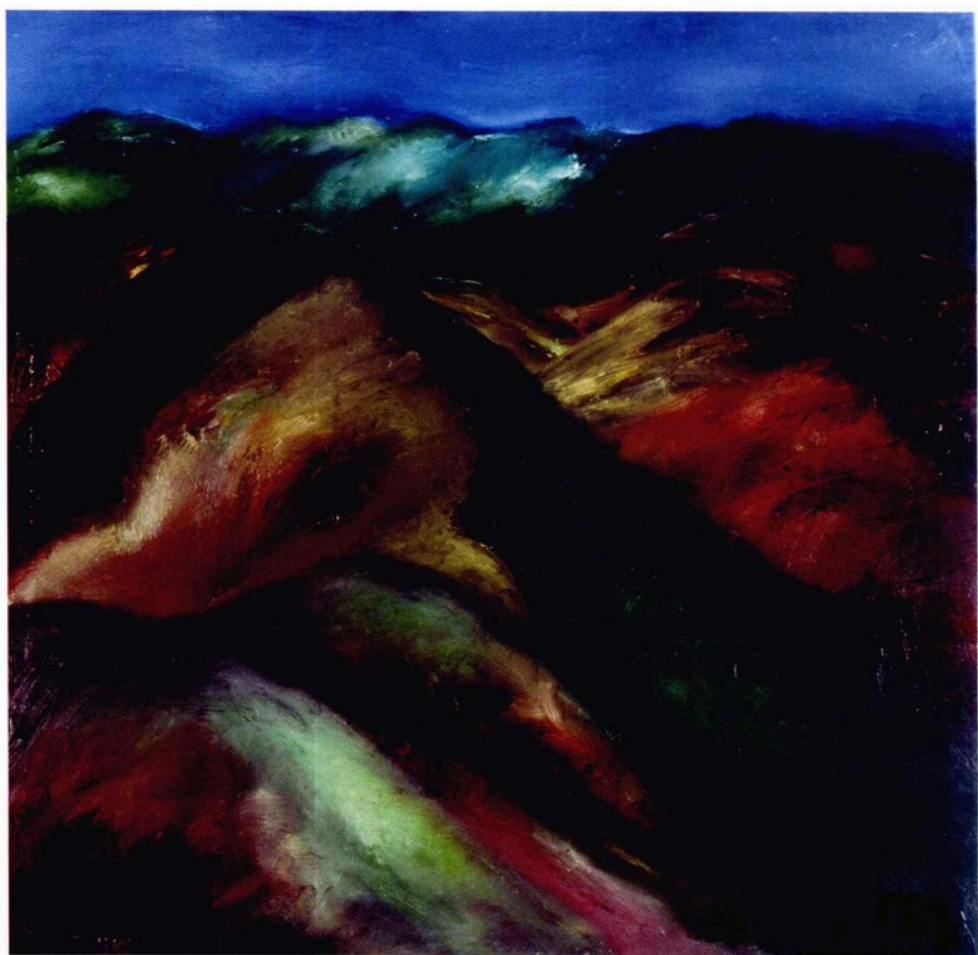
雷在山上的威力与其在山谷中的威力不同。在山上，雷声震耳欲聋；在山谷中，雷声则宣告着暴风雨的到来和紧张的消除。在此情景下，雷居于威力的中心，但它绝不能越过其限度。

谦虚和慎行就能确保成功，不能过于炫耀或引人注目，因为甚至道德高尚也会成为被攻击的目标。人们鄙视虚伪和傲慢，甚至当他们的行为从正义出发时也是如此。处境是困难的，因为我们必须隐藏我们的兴奋。我们还没有足够的力量采取重大行动，因此，我们必须继续待在阴暗之处，在山谷中休憩。刚强必须让位于软弱，因此，我们必须延迟行动。

我们必须待在原地不动，不要试图越过目前处境所允许我们前行的范围。这时我们只能期望小的成就。我们的精力应放在通过处事温和来进行人格修养上，而且我们的外在行为应该包括增强积蓄。要做到这一点，我们就要继续待在一个我们熟悉的周围都是具有坚强的意志力并与我们亲密相连的人的环境。当斗争到来之时，这些人会给予我们支持。当我们培养内在力量和毅力时，我们必须表现出外在的平易。要避免过早的消耗和不可靠的行为，我们必须谨小慎微。雷声能够令人恐怖，但如果我们等待，直至雷声移到山谷，紧张就会得到释放，我们也就能够完成甚至最艰苦繁重的工作。

反对卦：61. 中孚（内心的真实）





雷声
滚过山顶上
化成山谷中的
回声。

The sound of thunder
over the peaks
becomes a voice
in the valley.

63. 既济（成功之后）



离下坎上

当前进的道路看起来坦荡无碍时，就要确切明了该止于何处。

倾泻之水可以将火熄灭；烧水之火可以将水蒸发掉。但水与火不会总是针锋相对。如果用火烧水是为了向人提供给养，就是一种互利的事。如果二者中的任何之一走得太远，水与火就会超过其本身的性质限度。

在总体上乐观之时，任何事情看来都会很简单；这时，就必须特别小心以确保不要让热情过高的势头夺去我们的冷静推理。这一时期会吸引那些寻求扩大自己利益的投机分子。成功仍然会到来，但只有遵循正确的规则才能保证它的到来。首要的是不可只吃老本。应为实现最终目标进行持续稳定的努力。最难排除的障碍是：一旦危险已被克服，人们就容易停下来并往后看，津津乐道于已得到的成就。尽管这样会满足我们的虚荣心，但时间会证明这将是灾难性的，因为自满会削弱我们的力量并把敌人引进门来。我们必须停止于大洋岸边。

我们要阻止那些因存在一个乐观的环境而企图分享我们成功的投机分子。我们必须以正确的方式，不过分地、彻头彻尾地继续努力。一个伟大、辉煌的时刻即将到来，但现在我们必须抑制我们的激情，在我们已得到我们希望得到的东西的时候，再将它释放出来。特别要注意的是要保持一种摆脱错误自大的态度。如果我们自我祝贺，沉浸在我们克服所有障碍时所显示的力量中，我们就会招来不幸，因为命运只保护谦虚的人。与此相类似，命运也保护那些确切地知道该止于何处的人。

反对卦：64. 未济（成功之前）





不要走得太远。
即使陆地
也会
终止于海洋。

Do not go too far.
Even the earth
stops
at the ocean.

64. 未济（成功之前）



坎下离上

要想前行，就要把过去抛在脑后，并一直充满希望。

水不能把火熄灭，因为它在火的下面。当森林着火时，灰烬落到地上，将自然装扮成灰色；但火之红色是希望之色。大雨过后，太阳就会发出耀眼的光，森林就会从其灰色的外衣中恢复它的壮丽。

这是一个困难时刻。旧的已经过去，而新的还没有到来。火光让我们无法看清楚东西。似乎一切皆已失去，我们只能看到灰烬与毁灭——我们必须舍弃的残余物。我们必须记住，木灰能够为土壤施肥，新的生机从大地展露而出。似非而是的是，这是十分吉利之时。转折之时已经到来，进步只取决于我们前进的意愿。但危险隐藏在终点线附近，因为，当看到终点时，我们更易于因扭曲的接近感而犯错。如果我们想达到目标，就必须彻底摆脱过去。这样，从透着火红的灰色的灰烬中，一片新的更美的森林将会出现。

我们拥有所需要的能量，而且我们即将达到目标。任何事情都无法阻挡我们前进的脚步；希望比厄运更有威力。但我们必须采取适当的步骤。最后几步至为重要，因为在到达目的地之前，最后的几步如果不能完成，就会让我们前功尽弃。极为重要的是不要让以前的要求占上风。为了新的循环的开始，我们必须把过去抛在后面。只要怀有充沛的精力、谨慎的态度和坚强的毅力，我们就可以一直对未来充满希望。

反对卦：63. 既济（成功之后）





希望不是
你失去的
最后一件事情。
它永远不会失去。

Hope is not
the last thing
you lose.
It's never lost.

致谢

首先，我想对上海文艺出版社总编辑郑宗培先生对此书的兴趣以及最终批准此书的出版表示由衷的感谢。郑先生的友好、热情和真诚给我留下了深刻的印象。希望本书能不辜负他的殷切期望。

我还想特别感谢上海文艺出版社副总编辑曹元勇先生。他对我的初稿产生了浓厚的兴趣，因此提议出版本书。他在初稿准备的每一阶段都给予了指导，并成功说服张文智教授担当本书中文版的翻译。正是由于曹先生的专业以及对细节的关注，本书才能最终到达读者手中。

如果没有本书中文版的翻译者——张文智教授的帮助，本书的出版将是不可能的。张文智教授现为《周易研究》（英文版）编辑部主任，该刊由山东大学易学与中国古代哲学研究中心出版。作为一名著名的《易经》学者和两部易学专著的作者，张文智教授同意在百忙之中抽出时间来翻译本书。

张文智教授于1990年获得山东大学英语语言文学专业学士学位，2002年获得山东大学中国哲学专业易学研究硕士学位，2005年开始攻读中国哲学专业易学研究博士学位。他从2002年开始担任山东大学易学与中国古代哲学研究中心的办公室主任及《周易研究》学刊编辑。他尤精于象数易学研究及其英文翻译，已出版易学著作两部，论（译）文30余篇。张博士曾作为演讲人应邀赴新加坡、比利时及台湾等地多次参加学术会议，并于2007年9月至2008年8月赴美国哈佛燕京学社做了一年的访问学者。此外，他还担任中国周易学会的常务理事。

对张文智教授作为易学专家给予本书翻译之帮助，我在此表示深深的感谢。

本书的初稿用西班牙语写成，是对我的博士论文La esencia de la Naturaleza: Síntesis del pensamiento occidental y chino y su expresión en la pintura de paisaje（《自然的精华：西方与中国思想的融合及其在风景画中的表现》）的缩写。我自己先尝试着将初稿翻译成英文，结果简单的逐字翻译给译者和广大读者的阅读造成了不少困难。我的顾问编辑，也是我多年的好友——Frances Pettey Davis，帮我将本书译成了更简明易懂的英文。对此，我表示深深的感谢。

Frances P. Davis是一位获奖作家，报纸专栏作家以及自由编辑。她创作的故事、散文以及诗歌被刊登或收录在美国各大杂志、文选、旅行书籍、纸制及电子刊物中。她不辞辛劳地和我一起工作，力求使英文译本在保持原意的同时，词句更富有诗意和文学性。合作期间，她的洞察力使我重新思考书中的某些部分，并最终达到了深入浅出的意境。她采用诗歌体的形式进行翻译给了我很大的启发，帮助我将每一章节的精华浓缩成与书中文字及风景画相关的一首简短而深刻的小诗。

我要感谢我的中文老师刘蓓小姐。刘小姐承担了本书的回译工作，逐字将张教授的中文译本再翻译成英文，使我得以与原稿进行比较。由于几乎每个字都承载着一个概念，因此回译工作异常复杂并消耗时间。感谢刘小姐的耐心以及她对工作进度的严格遵守。

本书源于1987年我在西班牙马德里康普腾斯大学（Universidad Complutense de Madrid）所做的博士论文。当时，西班牙几乎没有人知道《易经》。如果没有我的导师，历史地理学院院长，已故的José Estébanez博士无条件的支持，我的论文几乎不可能提交给评审委员会。他邀请了哲学、艺术、历史、地理和伦理学领域的知名教授参加我的论文答辩会。答辩完成后，答辩委员会所有成员都感谢我为他们介绍了这本中国智慧宝库般的典籍。José Estébanez博士的勇气将永远伴随着我，他的精神亦将长存于本书中。

最后，我要将最深厚的感谢送给我的女儿Natalia Costea。她深受《易经》的影响，见证了本书成书的整个过程，从书中第一个字，风景画的第一笔一直到最后修改的完成，因此她几乎对书中所有的内容都非常熟悉。《易经》伴随着我们的家庭走过了阳光灿烂与风风雨雨的日子，并不断地给予我们智慧。我相信，它也会在今后的日子里一直陪伴在我们左右。



YI JING

Image, Concept and Action

Cristina Bertrand



This book is dedicated to
the Chinese people
and
to all those who wish to learn from the ancient Chinese pearl of wisdom
Yi Jing



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**Confucius said: If I were given more years of life,
even if I had began to study the Yi Jing at my age of fifty,
I could avoid making serious mistakes.**



A long time ago, a scholar traveled to the farthest mountains trying to find wisdom. He saw many sunrises and many sunsets. He collected the knowledge of different peoples, and he talked with the most eminent men in the world, but he did not find wisdom. His time was finished and he had to return to his home. On his door, someone had left a message:

**If you do not have
patience,
do not ask.**

**If you have patience
but lack courage,
you are yet in the middle
of the way.**

**If you have patience and
courage,
you will find peace of heart.**

**Now, go
and give your peace
to the first man
that you find
in your life.**

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF THIS BOOK

1. The Author's Introduction to the Yi Jing

This book was born from the challenge of making the profound concepts of the ancient Yi Jing (I Ching), or Book of Changes, accessible to the general reader. It is based on a doctoral dissertation I completed at the Complutense University of Madrid: "El Sentido de la Naturaleza: Síntesis del pensamiento occidental y chino y su expresión en la pintura del paisaje" (The Meaning of Nature: Synthesis of Occidental and Chinese Thought and Its Expression in Landscape Painting).

During my academic studies in the field of philosophy, I became interested in Chinese history and civilization. I undertook a comprehensive study of the works of Confucius (Kǒng Fūzǐ), Lao Tse (LaoZi) and other Chinese philosophers, and encountered in their writings many references to the Yi Jing. This encouraged me to begin an in-depth examination of the Book of Changes. As I read, I realized that many Confucian and Taoist concepts and teachings had their origins in the Yi Jing, and that Confucius, Lao Tse and many of their disciples had, in turn, contributed their knowledge and thoughts to the Yi Jing. Hence the book had continued to accumulate passed-on wisdom through the centuries.

The fascinating discovery of the blending of philosophies in the Yi Jing, the challenge of studying its structural system and the importance of understanding it as an ethical guide to action led to my decision to make the book the center of my doctoral dissertation. And, as a painter, I felt I could add another dimension—an aesthetic element—that could aid the reader in accessing the wisdom to be found in the Yi Jing.

This book is arranged according to the images (hexagrams) and concepts of the Yi Jing itself and offers a distilled essence of their meaning, along with poems and paintings based on those

images and concepts. To facilitate using the book for consultation, chapter keys provide a clue as to their content. Each chapter begins with a paragraph related to the natural image (as depicted by the painting) and is followed by a paragraph explaining the concept behind the image. The final paragraph serves as a general guide to action. The paintings and poems facilitate the union of concept and image, deeply impressing the essential wisdom of the Yi Jing in the mind.

The landscapes represented in the paintings in this book are from different regions of Spain, but they belong to all countries, and their symbology is universal. They are a personal expression of the meaning of the Yi Jing chapters. Some depict the elements in nature to which the trigrams and hexagrams refer (heaven, earth, mountain, lake, etc.). In others, symbolism is achieved through the use of colors or elements in the paintings (fire as a red rock, wind as a forest, thunder as a stormy mountain peak). In every case, I chose the landscape that I thought best expressed the concept of the hexagram and aided in its understanding.

2. About the Paintings in this Book: Expressionism as a Way of Knowledge

The Yi Jing paintings in this book are expressionistic landscapes. They were painted after an extensive analysis of each of the book's chapters, followed by a search for natural landscapes to find those that best represented the chapters' symbolism and meaning. Expressionism has at its core a perception of the inner nature of the object, and the more the artist understands that object, the better he will be able to express it in his work of art. Expressionism is the opposite of impressionism, which depicts the outside impression that the subject—in this case the landscape—leaves on the observer. The expressionist painter seeks to understand his subject in depth in order to reveal its inmost reality to those who view the painting. In the process of research and study of his subject, the artist also deepens his own understanding of reality.

Because the expressionist painter is concerned with revealing the inner reality of a subject rather than its outward appearance, he arranges objects in the painting according to their meaning and not according to aesthetics alone. Composition and color don't always follow the classical dictates of aesthetics. An expressionist painter may know how to center a figure on a canvas, but if he thinks the figure's face is the most important part, the face will take prominence in the composition, and the other elements will recede or even disappear beyond the edge of the canvas. Color is treated the same way. Colors are not seen as the reflection of light on an object, but are used to portray the internal "life" of that object trying to reach the surface. The expressionist artist allows himself complete freedom of color and form when creating a painting.

My landscapes, once expressed on canvas, exerted a profound effect on my contemplation of nature and appreciation of the Yi Jing. Besides providing aesthetic enjoyment, they became a way of understanding and gaining knowledge. For me, my paintings and the Yi Jing are inextricably bound together.



WISDOM AND ETHICS IN THE YI JING

1. The Yi Jing as a Book of Wisdom: Image and Concept

In his introduction to the Yi Jing, Richard Wilhelm, renowned Yi Jing scholar and the first to translate the text into German, states that it is one of the most important books in universal literature.

The first use of the book was oracular. However, its divinatory function was not very useful to those seeking advice because they had to passively wait for the prophesied events to unfold. Chinese sages sought a means of transforming the Yi Jing's divinatory function into a book of wisdom that people could consult when in need of guidance. Knowing that wisdom is active and that circumstances can be modified by will, they decided to study the laws of nature to discover their meaning in order to add this knowledge to the book.

The Yi Jing is a book of wisdom that can be read at a simple level to increase one's knowledge of the laws of nature. More intense study will reveal the deeper meanings that lie in the natural images. The Yi Jing teaches, by way of nature, the laws that govern the destinies of individuals. And, finally, it provides the ethical guidelines that are indispensable to achieving success through choosing the right course of action.

The Yi Jing is divided in 64 chapters, each beginning with a graphic image, the hexagram, so called because it has six lines. The hexagram is composed of two trigrams—sets of three lines—which correspond to an element in nature (heaven, earth, mountain, lake, etc.). Each chapter also contains the concept, or meaning, of the image. This concept explains underlying laws in nature, thereby functioning as a guide to correct, timely and ethical action in harmony with natural laws. The 64 hexagrams in their totality reflect all changes occurring in the realms of earth, man and heaven.

The Yi Jing reveals the image of an event that is about to manifest itself in the exterior world—

but at a point when it can still be modified. This initial point of infinite possibilities is the key to understanding the past, present and future, and provides the tool to modify our actions in order to achieve a desired end. The underlying theory is that every manifestation in the human world originated first as an idea that has become reality through the following of certain laws. Consequently, if a person is able to establish the link between the visible manifestation of events and the world of ideas and laws, then he can foresee the results of his actions and can choose the appropriate course of action to change or alter his situation.

Through depiction of natural landscapes and their transformations, the Yi Jing shows us that it is always necessary to consider man as a part of nature. This equilibrium between man and nature is what determines universal harmony. In each chapter of the Yi Jing, natural phenomena are expressed with such clarity that the lessons they teach can be easily assimilated. In these pages, wisdom is simplicity, and complexity is ignorance.

2. The Yi Jing as a Book of Ethics: Action

Divination, or fortunetelling, lacks moral value because no action is required from the people waiting for the predicted events to unfold. But the Yi Jing is a book of ethics. The authors offer not only a guide to action, but also point to the correct, ethical way of conducting the action to achieve the desired ends. Unethical conduct, the book points out, will never accomplish lasting and successful results. This is the profound value of the Yi Jing.

The Yi Jing reveals the link between the world of ideas and the human world by means of combining image and concept. Contemplating the image, we arrive at an understanding of the concept, which allows us to choose the right path. This is why the Yi Jing is essentially an ethical text. Its final aim is to help human beings discover, through action, a place of peace and harmony in their lives.

ORIGINS AND INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE YI JING

1. Origins and Authors

Yi Jing means “classic book” (Jing) of “Changes” (Yi). The word Yi has several meanings; among them “change” or “transformation,” “simple” or “easy,” and “permanent.” That the same word could mean both permanency and change appears paradoxical. But the Yi Jing reveals that change is in reality the only thing that is permanent; that is, life is in constant change, and human beings must be able to live with, and adapt to, that change. The word Jing, meaning “classic book,” refers to the Confucian classics, a set of books elevated to the category of canon because of their importance in the teaching of morality and ethics.

The Yi Jing is the first part, or ancient text, of the Zhou Yi (Changes of the Zhou dynasty), and comprises the 64 hexagrams along with the remarks about the trigrams and hexagrams and the text pertaining to the individual lines. Later on, an appendix, Yi Zhuang, “The Ten Wings,” was added in the form of Commentaries attributed to Confucius and his disciples. The Zhou Yi, therefore, contains both parts: the Yi Jing and the Yi Zhuang.

In Chinese literature, four sages are cited as the Yi Jing’s authors: Fu Xi, creator of the graphic representations of the lines and the trigrams; King Wen, who combined the trigrams into hexagrams and added the remarks; King Wen’s son, the Duke of Zhou, who wrote the text pertaining to the individual lines; and Confucius and his disciples, who added commentaries to the images and decisions.

According to tradition, the Yi Jing’s earliest origins date back to 2852-2738 B.C. They are attributed to Fu Xi, considered the father of Chinese civilization. He is said to have invented music, and he taught mankind many skills, such as the use of fishing nets, the breeding of silk

worms and the taming of wild animals. Legend says that Fu Xi saw a dragon-mare rising from the waters of the Yellow River, and from the lines on this mythological creature's back, he composed the lines of the eight trigrams. The union of the dragon, representing heaven, with the mare, representing earth, is of capital importance in Chinese culture.

During the Shang dynasty (1751–1111 B.C.), divination saw widespread use. Kings and aristocrats made divination an integral part of government, and they sought divinatory guidance before making important decisions. At one time, only the king had the power to interpret the oracles, which made him an intermediary between heaven and earth, adding authority to his mandate. The most commonly used method was the inspection of lines formed on animal bones after heat was applied. Those lineal symbols may have been the predecessors of the lines forming the Yi Jing hexagrams.

The last king of the Shang dynasty, Di Xin, was a cruel and despotic monarch. One of his subjects, Ji Chang, monarch of the small kingdom of Zhou, was a model of conduct and ethics. Di Xin, envious of his subject's success, ordered that Ji Chang be imprisoned in a cave. Legend says that during his seven years of imprisonment, Ji Chang entered into a deep meditation on the lines of the trigrams transmitted by Fu Xi. He then combined the trigrams into pairs—one above, one below—to form the 64 hexagrams. After Ji Chang's liberation and death, he was renamed Wen Wang, King of Civilization. His son, the Duke of Zhou, is said to have written the text that accompanies the individual lines. The Confucians venerated these rulers because of their morality, humanity and righteousness.



At the end of the Zhou dynasty (circa 770 B.C.), the kings lost importance, and nobles acquired more power. The Yi Jing came to be considered a book of ethics and was often consulted as a model of conduct and justice.



In the period of Spring and Autumn (770–476 B.C.), two important figures in Chinese philosophical and ethical thinking appeared: Lao Tse (6th century B.C.?) and Confucius (circa. 551–479 B.C.). In his famous book *Tao Te King* (*Dao De Jing*) or *The Way*, Lao Tse mentioned the theory of yin and yang, which demonstrated the influence of the *Yi Jing*. In the *Analects*, the book of Confucian philosophical commentaries written by Confucius's disciples, several sentences refer to the *Yi Jing*, among them the one that figures at the beginning of this book.

Through the centuries and dynasties that followed, the *Yi Jing* was held in the highest esteem by emperors, even surviving the burning of most of the classical books during the reign of Emperor Qin Shi Huang. Beginning in 213 B.C., all classic works of the Hundred Schools of Thought — except those from Chancellor Li Si's own school of philosophy known as legalism—were subject to book burning. The *Yi Jing* was spared due to its usefulness as a divination method and guide to action.

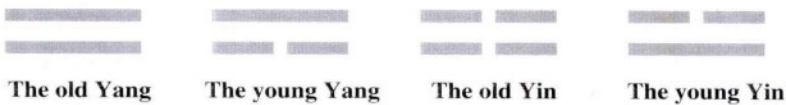
During the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), the *Yi Jing*'s text was published as an official imperial edition under the name *Zhouyi Zhezong*. This version was used for most of the occidental translations, among them the one by Richard Wilhelm, my main source in the study of the *Yi Jing*.


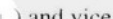
2. The Creation and Evolution of the Lines

In ancient China, when a person oppressed by destiny consulted a fortuneteller with a question about his future, the fortuneteller performed a ritual (frequently based on the lines formed on animal bones or tortoise shells) and answered with a “yes” or a “no.” The drawn lines were identified with polarities in the natural world: light and darkness, day and night, hot and cold, high and low, and so on. The sages designated the opposing principles as yang and yin and assigned an unbroken line  to the yang principle and a broken line  to the yin principle. If the person obtained an unbroken or yang line from the oracle, the answer to his question was a “yes.” If a broken, or yin line, was obtained, the answer was a “no.”

The sages realized that answers to troubling questions were necessarily more complex than a simple “yes” or “no.” A specific situation could always turn into its opposite (day becoming night and vice versa), so that an unbroken line (yang ) could become a broken line (yin ) .

These polarities—yang and yin—were considered as symbols of heaven and earth and their relationship as above and below. Due to the constancy of change in life and to the fact that a question could have two possible answers, the lines were duplicated to arrive at four figures, each composed of two lines. The first figure, with heaven below and heaven above—called the old Yang—meant a resounding “yes.” The second, with earth below and heaven above—the young Yang—meant a “no/yes” possibility, with more inclination toward the “no.” The third, with earth below and earth above—the old Yin—was a resounding “no.” Finally, the fourth, with heaven below and earth above—the young Yin—was a “yes/no,” with more inclination toward the “yes.”



Still, nature and human situations proved more complex than could be illustrated by the combinations of those two lines. In contemplating the phenomena of nature’s cycles, the wise men observed that some phenomena possessed a certain internal stability, changing very slowly, while others were very unstable, suffering sudden disintegration. From this observation they concluded that each line (phenomenon, situation) could be stable or unstable. Therefore, an unbroken line could be stable or unstable depending on the situation and timing, and, conversely, a broken line could also be stable or unstable. If a situation is unstable, the line will quickly change to its opposite. That is, a yang line () will become a yin line () and vice versa.

3. The Trigrams and Hexagrams

As already stated, every chapter of the Yi Jing begins with a graphic figure of six lines, the

hexagram, composed of two trigrams, or figures of three lines. How did the sages arrive at the three-line figure of the trigram from the two-line graphic previously described?

After studying the images of earth below and heaven above, the sages discovered a link between both: Man. With this discovery, they added a line in the middle to correspond with the human world, and the trigram was formed.

From the combination of three broken or unbroken lines and their positions—above, middle, or below—the eight trigrams came into being. The Yi Jing’s authors symbolically assigned these trigrams to a family composed of eight members, each member associated with an element in nature and its attributes in the human world.

Symbol	Family relationship	Name	Attributes
	Father	Heaven, The Creative	Creativity, strength, persistence, duration
	Mother	Earth, The Receptive	Receptivity, devotion, perseverance
	Oldest son	Thunder, Commotion	Movement, commotion, energy, power
	Middle son	Water, The Profound	Profundity, danger, adaptability, flexibility
	Youngest son	Mountain, Quietude	Quietude, calmness, strength
	Oldest daughter	Wind, The Gentle; Wood, The Penetrating	Gentleness, influence, gradualness
	Middle daughter	Fire, That Which Adheres	Brightness, radiance, adherence
	Youngest daughter	Lake, The Serene	Joyousness, serenity, gentleness

Continuing with their observations of natural phenomena and their interactions, the sages noted that sometimes the elements lay in an inferior position—as the water in a lake—and sometimes in a superior position—as the water contained in the clouds. The moment water from the clouds falls to the earth as rain, its position is reversed. The same thing occurs with fire inside a volcano. The volcanic mountain is above the fire, but during an eruption, the fire ascends, placing itself above the mountain. In both cases, the water and fire elements occupy different positions

according to timing.

The 64 hexagrams emerged, then, from the combination of the eight trigrams and their placement above or below. For example, the trigram Water placed above the trigram Thunder yields hexagram 3: Difficulty at the Beginning.



Trigram Water above

Hexagram 3: Difficulty at the Beginning

Trigram Thunder below

But if the trigrams are reversed—Thunder above and Water below—the result is hexagram 40: Deliverance.



Trigram Thunder above

Hexagram 40: Deliverance

Trigram Water below

The Yi Jing hexagrams were the result of all the combinations of change that can occur on earth, in the human world and in heaven. Moreover, all of these transformations and changes, external as well as internal, were organized into a coherent system of wisdom that could be consulted as a guide to action.

Paradoxically, the principle of change remained constant, forming the thread in a system of logical laws that follow each other with certainty.



CONSULTING THE YI JING FOR GUIDANCE IN DAILY LIFE

1. The Use of the Yi Jing for Consultation

The wisdom and the ethical guidance of the Yi Jing can be accessed through a general perusal of its chapters. The Yi Jing may also be consulted for its guidance in seeking an answer to specific questions. As a book of universal wisdom, it will always give us the appropriate answer, provided that the rules dictated by the book's structure are followed.

To use the Yi Jing as a guide to action for a specific question, we must adapt our question to the system established by the book: the yin and yang alternation. The book will only answer questions that consist of two alternatives, each one requiring a different action. In consulting the Yi Jing for guidance, it is important to choose—from the two possibilities or paths in front of us—only one to be the object of the question. The Yi Jing offers concrete answers to concrete questions. If used correctly, following this rule, it will always point to the right path.

2. Posing the Correct Question

As an example, let's suppose that we are faced with the dilemma of leaving our home to accept a tempting job offer in a foreign country. Our question could not be stated: "Should I stay in my country or accept the job offer in the foreign country?" The Yi Jing cannot yield an answer. The question should be formulated around only one of the possibilities: "Should I accept the job offer in the foreign country?" or "Should I stay in my country?" The Yi Jing can then provide an answer.

3. The Yi Jing's Answer

The Yi Jing's answer to our properly formulated question will be much more complete than a simple "yes" or "no." First, it will tell us if the goal we want to accomplish will be favorable to us or not. Second, it will illuminate the right path to accomplish our goal. And finally, if barriers stand in the way of a successful outcome, the book will provide advice on how to overcome or modify those barriers to achieve success.

For example, the Yi Jing might advise us to act decisively because the timing is appropriate to achieve a successful result or, on the contrary, might caution that, for the moment, we lack the necessary endurance to undertake a specific course of action, and that it would be unwise to embark on such a course without first building our strength. In all cases, by illuminating the outcome of every foreseeable event, the Yi Jing makes us conscious of the steps we need to take before acting in a given direction. It will also indicate how to undertake the successful completion of an action if, despite the predicted difficulties, that action remains our desired choice.

The Yi Jing's surprisingly accurate answers to our questions are not a mystery. Because the answers are objective, they reflect with exactitude the laws of cause-effect and, therefore, the possible results of our actions. To facilitate a further understanding of just how the Yi Jing clarifies our situation so that we can choose the right path, I applied what I term puzzle theory. Finally, to comprehend the laws governing the changes in that path or action, we can use the trialectic logic, so-called because it is based on the laws of threes, in this case, the union and interconnection of heaven, human beings and earth.

Very often, when we are facing difficulties and don't know what to do, we seek a trustworthy person to ask for advice—perhaps a parent, teacher or trusted friend. We do so because our subjectivity doesn't allow us to view the problem with clarity. Our emotions are so entangled with the problem that they obscure reality. When we explain the problem to other people, two

operative factors contribute toward arriving at a solution. First, we have to provide that person with a clear description of the problem, elaborating all the details and possibilities, thereby further clarifying the conflict for ourselves. Second, that person will consider the problem from another angle and can therefore give a more objective opinion. The combination of the clear description, along with a more objective opinion, will probably help us to resolve the situation.

The Yi Jing answers our questions in a similar manner. Once the problem is externalized in the form of a question posed to the Yi Jing, we gain a better understanding of our situation and can accept the logic of the Yi Jing's answer and act accordingly. The gift of the Yi Jing is that it empowers human beings to view their situation with objectivity and take appropriate action to achieve success.

The premise of the "puzzle theory" is based on the model of fitting together the pieces of a puzzle to complete a picture. Only through the precise positioning of every piece will a full and correct picture emerge—and with it a comprehension of the whole. No matter how many puzzle pieces we succeed in fitting together, if some are missing—or even a single piece—the final result will be altered. The missing pieces in a landscape, for example, might reveal a dangerous cliff or a beautiful tree. These last pieces are absolutely essential for achieving a complete picture. The Yi Jing performs this valuable service: It provides us with all the pieces necessary to illuminate the answer, therefore facilitating our powers of decision.





We have already seen that the Yi Jing provides a comprehensive method of understanding the laws of heaven, the laws of earth and the laws of human beings and their interconnections. It can do so because it is based on the trigrams whose lines include these three realms. The success of our actions, then, will depend on achieving a perfect equilibrium among the three levels. Through its teaching, the Yi Jing illuminates a logical way of acting that will place us in the correct place according to the correct timing. Therefore, if we follow the logic –trialectic- sequence of actions in

the path that the Yi Jing has previously illuminated we will reach a point of perfect harmony, the “trialectic point,” at which all our possible actions will inevitably be successful.

But, at the end, we have to remember that the answers to all our questions in life are already inside us, though we may not be able to see it. Once we see the problem in a more objective way, we possess all the pieces of the situation and we place ourselves in harmony with the universe, we, undoubtedly, will solve our problems and accomplish our goals.

We can choose to consult the Yi Jing as a general book of wisdom, or we can seek guidance through the use of the question-answer system. In either case, we will learn from its images and be guided by its ethics, thus adding enrichment to our lives and elevating us as human beings who can better serve society as a whole.

4. The Ancient Method of Consulting the Oracle

Two methods were employed in ancient times to obtain answers from the Yi Jing: using yarrow stalks and using coins. Both methods were based on obtaining, one by one, the six lines of the hexagram. Fifty yarrow stalks were manipulated with the fingers to derive several combinations of stalks that were reduced to only four possibilities: the number 9 (a yang line, unstable ); the number 6 (a yin line, unstable ); the number 7 (a yang line, stable ); and the number 8 (a yin line, stable ). (The symbols O and X are conventional notations and can appear differently written; in all cases, they represent lines that exist in a state of tension and imminent transformation into their opposites.) The hexagram was built from the bottom line to the top line, and the answer varied if the hexagram obtained had stable or unstable lines.

If the first hexagram obtained consisted entirely of stable lines, that hexagram was considered the answer to the question. If the hexagram had unstable lines, those lines were changed to their

opposites and another hexagram was drawn. Then both hexagrams would be considered as the answer, the first showing the present situation and the second the future. The answer was sought by focusing on the unstable lines in the first hexagram and the opposites of these in the second hexagram.

The coin method used old Chinese bronze coins, which had a hole in the middle and an inscription on one side. The inscribed side was assigned the number 2 and the reverse side the number 3. Each throw of the coins yielded the numbers 6, 7, 8 or 9. The coins had to be thrown six times in order to obtain the six lines of the hexagram, which was also drawn from the bottom to the top.

These methods may be considered as mysterious or superstitious today, but it is important to understand that the stalks were regarded as a humble product of the plant kingdom and therefore related to life and the cosmos. The value of the stalks derived from the aid they provided in helping man achieve a state of receptivity and openness to the forces of heaven and earth. An open and receptive mind was also required when coins were used to obtain the hexagram and accept the guidance it offered.

5. The Proposed Method for Consultation in This Book

The method I am proposing for consulting this book differs markedly from the two methods of consultation previously described. I recommend an approach based on acquiring a knowledge of the book, along with an active spirit of participation on the part of the person seeking its advice.

This book is based on an understanding of each chapter's meaning as a whole, which I derived after completing a detailed and complex analysis and synthesis of the hexagrams and all their possible transformations. For this reason, the individual lines are not described in the chapters.

A general perusal will be helpful in grasping the essential meaning of each chapter, but it is not necessary to read the book in a linear way from beginning to end. It is a book of discovery and

learning, and I recommend a leisurely read, browsing through chapters to discover those you find more appealing on a given day. The more the reader delves into the book, the more he will comprehend the deeper meaning of each chapter and the guidance it provides.

If desired, the Yi Jing can be consulted for guidance in solving a problem we are facing or to resolve doubts about a specific situation. In each case, you should read the chapter that seems most relevant to your situation. Again, this must be done in accordance with the guidelines stated above. The question should be formulated clearly, allowing for only one of two alternatives. In addition, your thoughts and feelings at the moment should be taken into consideration. For example, a feeling of powerlessness at confronting an insurmountable obstacle might lead you to the chapter "Obstruction." If paralyzed by indecision, unable to see which way to turn, you could choose the chapter entitled "Decision." Or if you are excited about a goal that you wish to accomplish, "Enthusiasm" might be a good choice.

As the reader becomes familiar with the book, he will more easily find the chapter that can deliver the answer he is seeking. When in doubt, he can consult the index of chapters for additional clues to each chapter's meaning (immediately following the chapter titles). Another possibility is paging through the book and stopping to consider the images and titles that seem most applicable to his situation. All of these options require active participation by the reader, both in formulating a clear question, and in conducting a well-considered and thoughtful search for the chapter that will illuminate his situation and act as a guide. Locating the appropriate chapter may present a challenge at first, but the more the book is studied and understood, the easier it will become to find the most helpful chapter. Whatever the method chosen, the Yi Jing will continue, as always, to serve as a source of wisdom.

It must be pointed out that the Yi Jing considers nature in a constant state of change. Thus, your situation may be stable at the time of the consultation, or it might be unstable (e.g., if your life is

entangled with many complications and problems at the time). If after choosing the chapter that you think is appropriate, you still don't understand the guidance it offers, that might indicate that conditions are about to change. In this case, you must convert the first hexagram to its opposite. A yang line (———) will become a yin line (— — —) and vice versa. Once you have obtained the opposite hexagram, read the text for that chapter. (These "opposite" chapter numbers can be found at the end of the text.). The first selection read refers to the present, and the second will indicate what the future holds if nothing is done to change it. Once this is understood, you can perform the appropriate actions to transform the situation. If, after reading the second chapter, you are puzzled by its message, put the book aside and allow the Yi Jing's teachings to passively permeate your thinking. Later on, when the mind is rested, things may appear clearer.

Since the Yi Jing firmly links concept and image, deeper study of the book will impress the image and the linked concept in your mind. Eventually, you will be able to step beyond simple aesthetic enjoyment of the natural landscape and see it in a new light, taking lessons from a new vision of nature. Thus the Yi Jing's wisdom will become an integral part of your life.

6. The Author's Wish

If we were to dedicate many years to the study of the Yi Jing, it is possible that we could avoid making serious mistakes, as Confucius said. But the Yi Jing also teaches us that a long journey begins with the first step. I, too, am at the beginning of that long journey. My objective in writing this book is to bring a new perspective to how readers view the landscape, deriving aesthetic enjoyment from it, learning from it and discovering, through the Yi Jing's images, the wise counsel and guide to action that will carry them through life's difficult moments.

Like the scholar who searched the world for wisdom, we, too, can discover that peace of heart lies at home. What to do with that peace will be entirely up to us.

CHAPTERS AND PAINTINGS



1. HEAVEN, THE CREATIVE



Heaven over Heaven

When in need of creative ideas, let Heaven guide you.

Heaven and Earth unite in an infinite line. The nature of Heaven is ascendant, and the nature of Earth is descendent. United, their forces converge and this union generates life.

Love, morality, justice and perseverance are the cornerstone attributes of Heaven. To lead a country, a ruler must love his inhabitants. If violence or fear is used to subjugate and subdue them, the backlash will be so strong that it will sweep away all progress. Morality is necessary to organize society around common goals. Justice is required to guard against unfair situations and to allow people to live in peace. Perseverance based on wisdom will illuminate the appropriate path to follow. Heaven governs time and encompasses germination, a point of infinite but mutable possibilities, the point at which the past touches the future. Duration through time gives us power over our destiny, because our actions today will shape our days tomorrow. Heaven acts as a guide, protecting us and accompanying us in all our earthly journeys.

The creative power of Heaven is manifested through strength and duration. There are ideas that must be acted upon, and we have the necessary strength to do so. Our advance must not neglect small details, because small matters, over time, can assume proportions of great magnitude. Patience is also necessary to ameliorate the power of creativity. Once we attain success, patience will help us retain it. With Heaven, firm and continuous action is required, but our advance should be complemented by the preparation and moderation conferred by Earth, so both can be united in a beautiful landscape.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 2. Earth, The Receptive



2. EARTH, THE RECEPTIVE*



Earth over Earth

If you lack the energy to act, let Earth nurture you.

Heaven and Earth unite in an infinite line. The nature of Heaven is ascendant, and the nature of Earth is descendent. United, their forces converge and this union generates life.

The attributes of Earth are yielding, devotion, moderation and correctness. Yielding means accepting what is offered to us according to our position in life. Earth in its devotion accepts all things under heaven and nurtures all human beings. Through moderation, great deeds can be accomplished. Finally, correctness is the companion of justice. Earth is the space that complements time, since time can only act within a space, and, conversely, space can expand thanks to time. Time delineates actions, and space expresses them, extending them to embrace all human beings and providing them a home. Every good action expressed through space is a thread woven in the fabric of life. Even if good actions are discontinuous, the cumulative effects they exert in space will endure and bring us peace. Through the union of Heaven and Earth, there is nothing in space or time that we cannot achieve.

The creative process must be balanced by a period of receptivity. Both creativity and receptivity should be harmonically integrated into human life. If we obtain Earth as an answer, we must accept its guidance. There are secret forces acting which we must trust in order to find the path without difficulty. This doesn't mean lapsing into inactivity, because preparatory steps must be completed to fill the void. Beauty and perfection should be the goal of the tasks we undertake, because they are also the attributes of Earth. Even though we may find ourselves spending time in silence and meditation, we can be certain that light will eventually illuminate our lives. From the equilibrium and harmony between Heaven and Earth, the beauty of the landscape will be revealed.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 1. Heaven, The Creative

**Explanation for the single image representing both heaven and earth: As an artist, I felt that an entire canvas filled with "heaven" would lack harmony. Similarly, a painting of just "earth" would lack unity and equilibrium. My solution was to paint both together united by an infinite line.*

3. DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING



Water over Thunder

When facing difficulties and confusion, stay focused on your objective.

Thunder, in contact with water, erupts in chaotic and powerful plenitude. The heavens reflect this tension, but the earth's contours display an underlying order. Thunder and water form storm clouds over the landscape below. After the storm, tension is dissolved, chaos yields to order and actions are successful.

Initially, chaos seems menacing, disconcerting, full of difficulties, but endless possibilities lie at this point of germination. The situation shows plenitude still to come. All formation periods tend to be confused and difficult, but they also contain the keys to success. Movement can prevent our seeing the clear path to action, but great success lies ahead, because thunder and water bestow powerful energy and perseverance. Chaos will eventually dissipate, revealing the peaceful landscape ahead.

A great undertaking stands before us: to identify chaos, reorder it and bring it under control. To accomplish this, we must act with intelligence and perseverance. If we have to embark on a journey, neither initial hurry nor haste along the road will lead to success. We must call upon helpers and not undertake action alone. Destiny always rewards those who discover the keys to unlock its mysteries. We must never lose sight of the objective. In this period of difficulty, others may pull us in opposite directions, because they themselves are tangled in chaos and are unwilling to make the effort to extricate themselves. Or they may wish to prevent us from succeeding. In this case, we must exercise extreme caution to avoid deviating from our goal. Focus on the image of the landscape; as in the painting, we can, with only a few strokes of the brush, order liberating rain to dissolve the initial difficulty.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 50. The Caldron

4. YOUTHFUL FOLLY



Mountain over Water

When paralyzed by danger, remain flexible, flowing like the river.

The small river meandering through the mountains slips past obstacles, filling the hollows to escape confinement and danger. In its youthful folly, it ignores the looming mountain, but that same folly lets it pass joyfully through the narrow gorge into the gentle embrace of the valley.

Paralyzing danger obscures judgment. Standing frozen before danger only increases its paralyzing effect. The young often escape danger through bold, but thoughtless, action. While daring action may help us escape the narrow gorge, we must remember that the power of water resides in its adaptability. In order to pass out of danger and reach our goal, it is necessary to take on the flexibility of youth and flow like water, which adapts itself to the irregularities of the terrain. But this action must be taken only in the present situation. Once the danger has passed, youthful folly can lead to another dangerous pitfall. Youthful folly, adopted as a tactic, must always fit the circumstances, because nature cannot be deceived.

Paradoxically, we must combine daring action with ingenuous spirit. At the same time we must pay scrupulous attention to the formation of our own characters. Spontaneous yet decisive action is required, as well as keeping a vigilant eye on the final objective. It is important to seek out a wise person who can help us understand the outcomes of different courses of action. Then we must follow with conviction the advice given, knowing that experience, combined with braveness, will invariably lead to success. The paradox is resolved in the image. A youthful course of action allows us to escape danger and continue along the path. No matter how small the river, its smiling advance allows it to bypass obstacles and find the way out.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 49. Renewal

5. WAITING



Water over Heaven

Waiting is difficult, but time is your ally, not your enemy.

Clouds begin to gather in the sky, while below, the earth waits for rain to feed the soil and bring forth food. No matter how fertile the earth, the cycle is incomplete without the nourishment of rain.

Waiting is difficult, but we must not confuse waiting with inaction. The essence of waiting is time, which is often considered an enemy to defeat rather than an ally to help us achieve our goals. We are tempted to interfere with the cycle of natural phenomena, forcing events to occur. This is due, in most cases, to our uncertainty about the final result. However, if we know how those phenomena will unfold according to universal laws, we will be able to anticipate the future, and the period of waiting will pass in the confidence of the final success.

To wait with confidence we must first make time our ally. This is only possible if we have inner strength. During this time of waiting, we have to strengthen our body and spirit through the cultivation of friendships and serenity. There will be occasions when we feel we have lost direction, and we may begin to believe that all our efforts have been in vain. But if we keep to our course with calmness and confidence, we will achieve success. We must pay close attention to how the circumstance for achieving success presents itself, because appearances can be deceiving. If we don't seize the opportunity in time, it will be lost forever. We must be prepared to accept the challenge of waiting, which requires patience, and to recognize favorable circumstances, knowing with certainty that the cycle will be completed and the goal accomplished.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 35. Progress

6. CONFLICT



Heaven over Water

Faced with a conflict, use your wits to compromise or retreat.

Heaven possesses the same strength as water, but the separate blues of heaven and ocean are divided by rock. The sky contains clouds of water, but the ocean will never permit its vastness to blend with the immensity of heaven. Thus, profundity and infinity remain separated.

Conflict arises from opposite directions. Once initiated, it sweeps away everything in its path, because contradictory forces destroy each other. Avoiding it requires extraordinary strength and accurate judgment. It is no use to believe we are in the right and must defend our position. Conflict will draw us in. When conflict is more powerful than justice, separation and discord reign, and not even heroic actions can achieve results. Only our intelligence can save us when danger threatens to destroy our peace of mind. It is essential that we escape the danger that is menacing us in order to preserve our own nature.

We must sharpen our judgment to understand the nature of the present conflict. We are faced with only two options: arrive at a compromise with the situation without imperiling our integrity, or escape the situation through a timely retreat. Retreat in this case is not a sign of cowardice, but of intelligence. We must analyze whether the irreconcilable positions that have given rise to the conflict are due to specific circumstances that will subside with the passage of time, or whether they are in radical opposition and cannot be resolved peacefully. If the latter is the case, retreat is the only option. Retreat must be undertaken with the confidence that ultimately we will reach our goal. What is ours and rooted in our internal nature will be returned to us, as the blues of heaven and ocean are reunited.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 36. Darkening of the Light

7. THE ARMY



Earth over Water

In battle, intelligence, preparation and justice will prevail.

Earth stands above water, which filters downward to form a slow-moving river. The underground river is invisible, but its effect is reflected in the land above, which always stands ready to take the water when needed.

The army acts as a positive, invisible force during peace time, but it stands ever ready to confront the enemy and avert destruction. However, only a just government that looks upon its army for defense will succeed in unifying its people. This government must be based on the principles of magnanimity and justice in order to secure the cooperation of its citizens who will agree to serve in the army. An army requires discipline and organization, and it must be directed by a leader trusted by everyone. Respect is only gained through a demonstration of strength and internal conviction. The army must be called forth only for causes that are just.

We must be ready for battle. These are difficult times, but we will achieve success if we act with intelligence and energy. In all battles, three factors will determine victory. First, never underestimate the enemy. Second, we should never use unjust means to achieve a just end— injustice never generates justice. Finally, we must be truly prepared for battle. If we are unprepared, a timely retreat is in order. This is not a sign of cowardice, but of good sense. If all conditions are met, we will gather the fruits of victory. Just as you call upon your inner resources to achieve victory in battle, water which lies hidden in the earth can rise to the surface when needed.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 13. The Community of Man

8. SOLIDARITY



Water over Earth

In forming a union with others, choose to be either a leader or a follower.

Water fills all the earth's hollows, embracing it completely. Sometimes water covers the land, allowing only islands to appear. The islands cling to the ocean's floor, striving upward to see the heavens.

Solidarity generates extraordinary power. In seeking the solidarity of union with others, we can choose to lead or we can follow. It is important to make the right choice. Becoming a leader requires courage, consistent behavior and strength. One can only occupy this position through adequate preparation. Success is unattainable if we adopt a subordinate position when we should be leaders, or if we attempt leadership without possessing the necessary strength or energy. Both the timing and the motivation for seeking solidarity are important. If we miss the opportune time to join in solidarity, the door will be closed forever. If the reason for seeking solidarity is not based on justice, we won't be able to achieve union.

We can only achieve solidarity if we unite with people with whom we share common interests and goals. Solidarity by itself is a void concept. Islands may be joined to each other, but they cling to the seabed for sustenance. Union is not a finality, but the means of reaching a goal. Sometimes life places us in situations that are dissonant with our inner nature. In the name of an imagined solidarity, we may be forced to adapt to hostile circumstances. In this case, we must act with extraordinary caution, resisting negative influences. If, on the contrary, the timing for joining with others is right and the cause just, then the goals of union will be met. Solidarity will achieve a success that will be as visible as the islands emerging from the sea.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 14. Possession in Great Measure

9. ACCUMULATION OF THE SMALL



Wind over Heaven

Small problems can build to large obstacles; sustained effort will bring success.

Weak wind passes over the plain, lacking power to form clouds. Thus, patience is required. The sky still offers clues of nascent clouds. Relief is in sight, and the expectant plain waits for rain.

When we are faced with a task of major proportions, we might undertake it prematurely, trying to begin as soon as possible, without waiting for optimal conditions. Preparatory steps are always essential, even more so in important projects. Precipitate action will end in catastrophe, because what is accomplished prematurely is eventually lost. We may underestimate the difficulties and overestimate our strength. Sometimes the accumulation of small difficulties can become more oppressive than bigger obstacles. Therefore, we must proceed cautiously, step by step, allowing the accumulation of small accomplishments to produce great results, as clouds gather to produce rain.

When problems pile up on a small scale, we may believe they are easy to deal with. But there is danger in believing in easy solutions and not undertaking a deeper analysis of the situation. It is a mistake to engage in hasty action, without first resting to gather our strength. It is crucial that any actions we take, even small ones, achieve success. We must conform to the current situation, rest and wait. This is not the time for beginning major projects, but a time to maintain what has already been gained. Without continuous effort, whatever we have accomplished will be lost. If we persist in our goal, nourishing rain will appear.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 16. Enthusiasm



10. CONDUCT



Heaven over Lake

If life places you in a subordinate position, exercise your judgment and act with dignity.

Heaven and lake occupy different levels. Heaven is above and lake sits in the middle of the earth. They exist, according to their essence, in perfect equilibrium. There are no storm clouds on the horizon, and the two regard each other in a serene landscape.

Sometimes we occupy our predestined place in life, and at other times we are obliged to remain in a position below our expectations and abilities. Out of pride we may try to elevate ourselves heedless of the cost, but in the process we lose our dignity. As heaven and lake serenely occupy their places above and below, so an individual in a lower station should not regard the successes of those above him with envy. The situation may have its advantages. We aren't saddled with the obligations attached to the higher position, and we are free to develop our spiritual side in peace, engaging in reflection without pressure from outside. Thus, we can acquire more accurate judgment. If we can reach an understanding of the reasons for our present place in life, we need not be anxious, knowing that eventually we will achieve a standing more appropriate to our merits. Through patience, when the time comes, we will be prepared to assume leadership responsibilities and will be able to exert a beneficial influence on others.

We must not envy people around us nor question why we occupy a lower level. Because we are free of social obligations, our gradual advance will be constant. Destiny cannot be deceived; it has prepared success for us, but only if we reach it step by step. This is the time for maintaining dignified conduct and not attempting major accomplishments. We should not overestimate our strength or rush into action, because we will lose whatever ground we have gained. Thus, when presented with a major undertaking, we will have fulfilled all the stages required for achieving final success.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 15. Modesty

11. PEACE



Earth over Heaven

You may achieve peace, but continuous effort is necessary to sustain it.

Earth and heaven are in equilibrium, and the landscape is at peace. But when earth abandons itself to move toward heaven, it loses connection with its own nature. The rolling hills are about to alter the equilibrium of earth and heaven, but earth can draw the line back to its infinite and primordial place.

In the human world peace reigns when efforts are united for a common cause. These are times of flowering, fulfillment and big undertakings, which will be successful because they are favored by a peaceful environment. But the task at hand must be accomplished with the help of others, who will follow us if we demonstrate that we can exert energy comparable to the vigor of nature in spring. A period of peace, if left to its own development, unattended, will turn into stagnation, because of the human tendency to relax tension and abandon effort during peaceful times. Although peace is a highly favorable situation, extraordinary effort is required to maintain it.

This is the time for action on a large scale, provided the appropriate conditions are met and we possess the necessary strength. We must work with many people in collaboration, even those who are flawed and weak. Extraordinary times require extraordinary measures. We must proceed without doubt or hesitation. If negative circumstances arise to interrupt our journey, we must rest until the time is right to advance again. Even though everything points in the direction of final success, progress sometimes lies in retracing a few steps. This sign also contains hidden stagnation, but, through dint of effort, it is possible to achieve an indefinite period of peace.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 12. Stagnation

12. STAGNATION



Heaven over Earth

Fighting stagnation will provide the strength necessary for success.

Heaven draws back from earth as autumn arrives. When the equinox passes, autumn brings forth presages of decay. The influences of heaven and earth diverge, and the forces of earth gather together for the long rest of winter.

At the moment, everything is paralyzed, action is on hold, and inertia has taken possession of the earth. The internal laws of peace have produced stagnation, but this is, paradoxically, a very favorable sign. Peace, left to its natural evolution, reverts to stagnation, but stagnation does not automatically revert to peace. A period of peace requires great effort to sustain, but stagnation requires extraordinary efforts to transform. If we focus only on the negative aspects of stagnation—or standstill—it is difficult to see any favorable aspects. We must trust that there is always a way out of difficulty and that the effort we exert in fighting stagnation will build great strength, which will endure once we achieve success.

We must be extremely cautious and refuse offers to participate in public life, even if those offers are promising or flattering. This is not the time to accept unearned or undeserved acknowledgements or payments. We must strive to avoid collaboration with the occult forces of stagnation. It is the time to retreat and ready ourselves internally for future advance. It is necessary to weigh each obstacle that confronts us and to acquire strength equal to the obstacles. We should not attempt to destroy these obstacles, but to go beyond them. Through the use of our intelligence and effort we will transform stagnation into peace. And in the end, earth and heaven will be united once again.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 11. Peace

13. THE COMMUNITY OF MAN



Heaven over Fire

For actions that can't be accomplished alone, seek community with others.

The brightness of heaven unites with the brightness of fire. Earth is illuminated as people gather around hearth fires to enjoy the fruits of their labors. Without the human element, the energy generated by so much brightness would be excessive. At the end of the road, fire is the symbol of home.

Men working in community acquire great strength that allows them to undertake even the most difficult ventures. Grand actions require enormous effort, which can only be achieved through the union of men. While acting in community with others, it is important to maintain links with home. Eating and resting should precede any extraordinary undertaking, but once a decision has been reached, we must act quickly. Fire is fast and ephemeral, consuming wood rapidly and transforming it to ash. Actions must, therefore, be firm, fast and decisive in order to achieve success before the fire is extinguished. At the same time, every action must be preceded by judgment.

Heaven and fire illuminate everything, revealing hidden intentions. Actions must be based on fair judgment aimed at objectives that are clear and correct. To arrive at a fair judgment and act decisively, we need the help of collaborators, because this is a time of community and sharing. We lack the necessary strength to achieve success alone, and it is not a sign of weakness to seek help. Fire requires human hands united to maintain the flame that provides illumination and sustenance. Only when fire heats food to nourish the family will the house become a home.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 7. The Army

14. POSSESSION IN GREAT MEASURE



Fire over Heaven

When faced with a great undertaking, clear judgment, fairness and sharing will bring success.

Fire reaches high into the heavens, uniting its brightness with the sun. In this powerful light all things are made manifest. Earth receives the power and energy of both, and the landscape trembles with illumination.

The meaning of this sign is clarity in judgment and decisiveness in execution. There is strength in human nature and culture in society, because the shining sun illuminates all things and enlightens human beings. Both good and bad intentions stand out in the light, and nothing remains hidden. Possession in great measure is within our reach, but advance is arduous, and one must seek helpers to share the effort as well as the rewards. Excessive weight in a carriage will break it, but if others help us to lighten the load, it will carry us to our final destination. Possessions alone won't make us wealthy; wealth depends not only on the quantity of goods obtained, but also on their availability and the use to which they are put.

The time has come for acting on a grand scale. It is the hour for making great decisions and putting them into practice. Our actions will lead to good fortune if they are based on sound judgment and undertaken without delay. Success must not be considered the goal itself, and the fruits gained should be shared. Beware of excessive complacency regarding tasks accomplished, for this could be an obstacle to further advance. The opportunity of possession in great measure is ephemeral, and we must make the best use of our energies during this time to accomplish great deeds. Fire and heaven illuminate the road ahead.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 8. Solidarity

15. MODESTY



Earth over Mountain

For every task in life, and for life itself, make modesty a part of your nature.

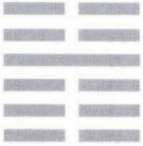
Mountain stands between heaven and earth, capturing clouds, whose rain nourishes the earth. Mountain is ascendant and earth is descendent. If mountain hides its essence under earth, it loses energy, but earth shores up the crumbling mountain. Such is the all-powerful strength of modesty.

Modesty is very auspicious because its power comes from the inner nature of man manifesting itself on the outside. The law of heaven empties what it is full and fills what it is empty; modesty is powerful because nothing opposes it. Modesty levels social differences and doesn't seek honors or prestige, following a path far from the reach of envy or resentfulness. To follow heavenly law, we must empty our lives of the negative and fill the void with modesty. In this case, nothing will oppose our path to success.

A decisive advance cannot be undertaken without first eliminating the errors of the past and the indecision of the present. The new needs space to take root, grow and be nurtured by positive qualities. Modesty should always accompany this process. If great success is accomplished and man remains modest, he will be praised by all. If only small tasks are completed, modesty will make them appear greater. In both cases, a modest man will follow his path to a successful end without resistance. As the mountains hide their size and power in the earth, displaying only small patches of earth on the green plain, so modesty shines on the outside while maintaining its true power inside. Together, mountains and earth, as equals, paint a harmonious landscape.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 10. Conduct

16. ENTHUSIASM



Thunder over Earth

If you wish to acquire and spread enthusiasm, cultivate serenity and equilibrium.

At summer's beginning, powerful thunder surges forth from the earth, manifesting itself in the heavens. This presages storms, rain and the dissolution of tension. Thunder has barely arisen from the depths, but its power extends over all the land.

Enthusiasm represents advance along the line of least resistance, without obstacles and in synchrony with time. After the storm, tension is dissolved, and nature breathes freely and prepares for the new season. In the human world, what is dissolved is mental confusion and character rigidity. To achieve this dissolution, we must initiate action with the same joyful spirit and open heart that we experience through music and dance. Enthusiasm is contagious, and helpers will come forth to accept and share the burden as long as they can participate in the undertaking. We should not take advantage of this help nor allow enthusiasm to carry us too far. Advance also requires equilibrium to keep it from degenerating into superficiality.

We must first cultivate our inner enthusiasm, gathering the strength and serenity required in order to act later with moderation and equilibrium. Our energy should manifest as gentleness with others to obtain their continued cooperation. When we are ready and the moment for action is at hand, our action must be precise and exemplary. People will follow us, because enthusiasm inspires followers. This is an energetic but exhausting time. We must stop to rest, to calm our spirits and to enjoy our accomplishments before resuming our actions. Light bursts from the earth in surges, but work is required to keep it shining so that it can continue to illuminate the heavens.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 9. Accumulation of the Small

17. FOLLOWING



Lake over Thunder

When trying to attract followers to help accomplish an objective, employ a serene joyfulness to keep them united.

Thunder lies over the lake's center. The water receives its power and thunder rests. In autumn, the electrical forces heralded by thunder move to the earth's depths. Movement follows thunder in its strength, but also in its rest.

Following occurs when lake's joyfulness unites with the force and movement of thunder. Joy must be restrained through rest so that it will not lead to thoughtless action. And movement cannot be forced, but should serve as a measure for action. Only in this way can following by others be won. It is necessary to exert great effort and wisdom to adapt to this time. Joy can achieve an easy following, surpassing all obstacles, because it is manifested unpretentiously. This is not the time to shine in the limelight, but a time to rest and gather energy, as thunder retreats to hide its power. Soon enough the time will come when we can shine out with the brilliance necessary to maintain our influence over the following we have acquired.

In times of following, we must mix freely with all kinds of people in order to better understand our circumstances and environment. It is very important to choose as followers people who share common interests with us. Shallow or opportunistic people who might follow us could obstruct our path. The key is to differentiate between the people who can help us and those who use flattery to remain by our side. Complacency in accepting flatterers as followers will obstruct action. Let joy be our guide, and renounce any help that saddens us. Lake can only follow thunder joyfully.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 18. Rectification

18. RECTIFICATION



Mountain over Wind

When feeling weak and unable to act, rectify circumstances through decisive action.

Wind blows at the base of the mountain, but cannot ascend to the heights, so it retreats to the valley, and, in the way of winds, destroys plants and flora. The mountain resists the wind, which will have to grow lighter to reach the heights.

Weakness has led to inertia, a negative element that should have been battled at its first manifestation. Inertia can only be modified by energetic action. The task before us is difficult, but not impossible. Small mistakes committed in the past, if left without correction due to inertia, could become powerful, impeding our advance. We cannot overcome powerful obstacles through gentleness or indifference. On the contrary, we must use our wits to fight against the elements that gave rise to stagnation. We must be like the wind, stirring up people's spirits, encouraging them to act, and, at the same time, we must be as the mountain, providing calmness and strength to build character. We are not faced with inexorable destiny, but with a situation caused by our own indifference and rigidity. Arduous work is required to change not only the external circumstances that have deteriorated, but also the deficiencies in our own character.

We must undertake a systematic analysis of the obstacles to understand the nature of their origins. This analytical period is crucial to final success. If opposition and rigidity are too strong and our forces are limited, we must take a detour, searching for the right opportunity to act calmly, in an inconspicuous way, just as the wind surrounds the mountain to reach the other side. Then, provided we have the strength, we must decide on a path and work quickly to end the period of inertia through action. Sometimes, we must first work on ourselves to overcome internal obstacles that keep us from seeing the goal. If we accomplish these tasks successfully, we will be free to wander the welcoming space of the valley.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 17. Following

19. APPROACH



Earth over Lake

In seeking out helpers, accept everyone with good intentions.

Above the shores of the lake is earth, which embraces the lake with its infinite vastness. The depths of the lake provide the earth with repose and endless sustenance. Earth and lake come together, each enriching the other, connecting depth and surface.

The time of approach is very favorable, but it doesn't last long. All the forces are now united to favor transformation, advance and success. Approach may be achieved through teaching, which cannot exclude anyone. Approach should always be undertaken according to the rules of reciprocity. Leaders should approach their followers modestly, remembering that without them, leadership is meaningless. They must choose efficient helpers, without discriminating against anyone because of his social position. Helpers should reciprocate by providing excellent work. This time of power and influence must not result in an attitude of complacency. Only through seeing the fruits of their action and the joyfulness of their followers can leaders achieve real success. Once success is achieved, its rewards must be shared with everyone who has contributed.

It is a time of hopeful progress toward success. We must avoid complacency and condescension. It is important to find capable helpers and approach them with modesty and sincerity, excluding no one. Our care for them and our teachings to them should be enduring and tireless. This is not the time to rest, but a time to keep going, taking advantage of the auspicious situation. Success is certain, and we have the strength to achieve it, but we cannot rest on our merits or slacken our efforts, because this period won't last. Finally, merit and praise should be shared by all prior to the arrival of great fortune.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 33. Retreat

20. CONTEMPLATION



Wind over Earth

To understand the actions of others, apply just criteria.

Wind circles the earth, pushing into hidden places, lending the earth movement. Earth travels with the wind, which finds resting places in her landscape. Earth provides a hill for the wind to contemplate the land.

Contemplation may be carried out in two ways: the contemplation of other people to understand their actions, and contemplation directed inwardly to discover whether or not our own behavior is appropriate and just. Both have internal laws which we must understand and follow. When we judge other people, we often do it based on our own narrow criteria, and these perceptions are insufficient and unfair. In looking inward, trying to understand injustices we believe we have suffered, we tend to overestimate our virtue, exaggerating unjust actions committed against us. We complain about life, destiny and our situation or position, without realizing that life always returns to us the fruits of the seeds we have planted. In both cases, our contemplation is defective. By adopting the superior position, standing at the peak of the hilltop, we can contemplate the heavens above and men below. At the same time, we become the subject of contemplation by those all around. In this way we are incorporated into the landscape and the lives of others.

This is the time to analyze our environment and ourselves. We don't yet know what path to choose because we lack an all-encompassing perspective. We must start from the beginning. First, we must undertake a contemplation of the people near us with an open and accurate mind, not judging them by their words but by their actions. Furthermore, we must investigate whether the actions taken by others have yielded successful results. Finally, we must determine if what is still presenting us with resistance is due to external obstacles or to our own character weaknesses or wrongful actions. Precipitate or hurried action will lead to failure. Only through contemplation with the utmost attention and reflection will we be able to acquire the comprehensive point of view necessary for successful action.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 34. Power in Great Measure

21. DECISION



Fire over Thunder

When facing a large obstacle, use determination to surmount it.

The mountain rears its defiant head, but the sound of thunder at its peak dissolves the tension. The image of the mountain beckons us, but our progress is impeded. Thunder is unseen, but its power can pierce the mountain's bulk to rest in the valley beyond.

We are faced with an obstacle, and we have several options: avoid it, circle it, escape from it or destroy it. But we can also decide to cut through the obstacle with energy and determination and arrive at the other side. Obstacles in life may grow slowly, but sometimes, through our indifference and lack of resistance, they can become insurmountable. When obstacles make their first appearance, gentle, just, decisive action can overcome them. But when they have assumed large proportions, and their height and mass impede our vision, action on a grand scale is called for. It is necessary to penetrate the depths of the obstacle in order to come out on the other side. The obstacle need not be destroyed, but we must dig deep to find a way through. Once we have gained access to the valley beyond the mountain, the obstacle will fall behind us.

We must act quickly and energetically. Clarity and power, the attributes of fire and thunder, will help us. First, we must identify the elements that have allowed an obstacle of such magnitude to develop. An accurate assessment of the situation will help us to decide the appropriate steps to a solution. Once we have uncovered the obstacle's origins, and we have fixed upon the right direction for action, we should lose no time, but act with determination and persistence. Doubt and indecisiveness will lead to failure. The mountain cannot be penetrated through gentle action. It is possible that our associates may question our actions, but if we let their influence cause us to fall back even a single step, we will lose everything we have gained. We must press forward in order to reach the other side of the mountain and contemplate the new landscape that lies before us.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 48. The Well

22. ADORNMENT



Mountain over Fire

If you wish to possess great riches, first adorn your own character.

Mountain descends, and in its interior, fire takes refuge. Their forces are in equilibrium. Mountain tempers the burning power of fire and is illuminated within, becoming beautiful. When a mountain harbors gold, it shines in the sun, and the sun hides its brilliance inside to preserve its nature.

Sometimes in life we acquire great things—luxurious possessions, power and influence—and we consider ourselves very fortunate. This is not a negative situation, unless these attributes and luxuries don't correspond to our merits. External image and beauty are important, but only when they reflect our interior nature. Hidden gold is invisible, but it makes the mountain shine when it is reflected by the sun. Danger lies in expending so much effort on the pursuit of status and acclaim that one abandons the work on his own inner nature. Clarity of purpose, along with gradual action, will bring us both external riches and interior peace.

Details are of critical importance at this time; it is not the time for undertaking action on a grand scale. Adornment must be acquired bit by bit, through small accumulations. We must not look at this process as tedious, skipping steps to hasten our arrival at the final objective. The beauty and value of a mountain that contains gold lie in its interior, not in its height; if we cultivate and adorn our interior, our behavior and actions will also shine like gold.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 47. Exhaustion



23. DISINTEGRATION



Mountain over Earth

If you are surrounded by turmoil, tranquility can save you.

The steep-sided mountain rising abruptly from the earth will suffer erosion, lapsing eventually into a plain. Only the smooth, broad-based mountain can resist time's passage and the battering of nature.

Excessive power does not accumulate in one day, nor does it last forever. Its internal dynamic will cause its disintegration, sweeping away everything in its path. If it is important to understand the mechanism of power accumulation, it is even more important to know its weak, disintegrating points. These are times of great danger, because disintegration destabilizes our surroundings and clouds our judgment. The physical elements cannot help us; neither the devotion of earth nor the power of mountain will come to our aid. Only tranquility can withstand the devastating forces of nature.

Quietude can help us to save ourselves from the powers of disintegration. We are in the middle of danger, and our first impulse is to escape. Movement in this direction will only aggravate the situation, because it takes us away from our place of concentration and rest. Defeat seems imminent. Our first duty must be to defend ourselves and our resting place and to avoid contagion from the agitation around us. The earth's receptivity will allow us to adapt to a situation that we know is temporary. The most important thing is to maintain our internal serenity, which is our only fallback during a time of disintegration. If we retain our integrity and remain steadfast in our position, victory will be ours.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 43. Resolution

24. RETURN



Earth over Thunder

If your efforts have not yet born fruit, calmness and readiness will bring success.

Winter solstice is celebrated as a time of rest. The winter energy of thunder is below the earth, which regenerates during its time of repose, preparing for the spring renewal. The land prepares furrows for the next harvest, and the seed gathers strength to emerge into the light.

Errors arise from the transgression of laws. If physical laws are transgressed, the result is illness; if psychic laws, madness. The movement of the seed toward germination follows strict laws which, if interrupted, will impede its development. All movement follows a cycle with its own regularity; haste won't accelerate the cycle. We must always keep in mind what seed we have planted so as to be sure that it will develop according to our expectations. We are certain to obtain the fruits of the harvest that will come to fruition at the beginning of this new cycle. But we must be prepared to harvest the crop as soon as it is ready. Left too long, it will become parched and lifeless.

Return requires calmness based upon certainty about what is going to happen, and a readiness to correct problems before they become insurmountable. We needn't exhaust ourselves with premature action, because we already know that the appropriate action at the correct time will be productive. Now is a time for waiting and resting. On the other hand, if some of our past actions have yielded unexpected and negative results, this is the time to return to the beginning of the road, the place where our intentions were still pure. Rest and rectification are required as we await the return of the land's infinite plenitude.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 44. Coming to Meet



25. THE UNEXPECTED



Heaven over Thunder

If you are bogged down by monotony, embrace the unexpected.

The way is monotonous, surrounded by barren limestone. At a sudden turn in the road, it appears: Thunder, disguised as a monolith, takes refuge in the heavens, which welcome it graciously. The massive rock seems disconnected from the surrounding land, but, nevertheless, due to its unexpected appearance, it is a part of the whole.

Innocence and spontaneity in action, without hidden or ulterior motives, are so powerful that success is guaranteed. Innocence shines forth because it springs from intelligence and lack of malice. While one can sometimes advance more quickly by employing contrived or covert tactics, the internal contradiction of such actions will finally destroy the results. The success of innocence, however, can never be destroyed by an external situation. What is due to us will arrive in good time, and we must be prepared to recognize it, because it may appear unexpectedly. If we fail to recognize it and let it pass, it won't reappear at the next bend in the road to surprise us a second time.

We must act spontaneously, trusting our primal and inner nature, without striving for objectives that are out of our reach. At this time, we must call upon strength and clarity. Strength is required to wait with patience for success if it takes longer to arrive than expected. Clarity is needed to recognize and embrace the unexpected. It is also essential to recognize the exact time to act and to receive. If we pay attention to the obstacles and the bends in the road ahead, traveling our path slowly, enjoying the landscape and the life that thrives in it, success will come to us unforeseen, but dressed in splendor. And, because we are ready to receive it, the unexpected will form a seamless blend with the landscape.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 46. Ascension

26. ACCUMULATION OF THE GREAT



Mountain over Heaven

When advance seems easy, control your energy and exercise flexibility.

The sky lies over the middle of the mountain and is caressed by its heights. Heaven surrounds the mountain, while maintaining its own tranquility. For a while, the mountain holds up the heavens, and their forces are united, resting in the landscape.

This a time of extraordinary strength, but it must be controlled to keep it from degenerating into oppression. Advance appears to be free of obstacles and our energy seems inexhaustible. This impression might lead us into the danger of undertaking precipitate and elaborate action in order to reach the summit and the heavens as soon as possible. We must proceed along the path step by step. The mountain is above the sky and restrains its power. Similarly, there are situations in life in which success is assured, but only if we don't undertake untimely actions. The summit is cloudless, but the slopes are steep. There is no doubt that we will eventually arrive at the mountain's peak, and from there, our vista will extend over an endless landscape.

We possess clarity and strength, and it is the time for action. In these exceptional times, everything depends on the power of our character. We must advance and retreat, reining in our strength for the subsequent advance; every step must be taken gradually, but with energy. We will not eliminate the difficulty through direct attack. This tactic will only drain our energy, and we will be thrown back into the valley to begin our ascension again. Through sustained control and release, our energy will grow so flexible and strong that nothing will resist its advance. The situation is perplexing, because movement does not proceed in a straight line, but meanders back and forth, advancing and retreating until the goal is accomplished. Once we have achieved the summit, we can touch the sky.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 45. Reunion

27. NOURISHMENT



Mountain over Thunder

If you envy those supported by others, learn to value your own freedom and strength.

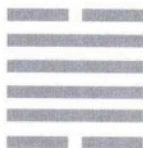
The movement of thunder, which triumphantly surges forth in the spring, rests in the depths of the mountain. Only in the deep quiet of earth can seeds germinate to bring forth fruit. Thus, it is movement that creates all beings. The mountain accepts the movement within and is calmed.

Nourishment is a source of energy, but inadequate or unhealthy nutrition can cause illness. Nutrition is an ally because it provides strength for the accomplishment of great enterprises; it is also a key to understanding other people. In studying others, we must observe the aspects of their personality they choose to groom, care for and nourish, and which ones they neglect, materially as well as spiritually. We can provide for our own nutrition or leave it in the hands of other people. Sometimes, a free person who takes care of his own care and nourishment may envy people whose needs are taken care of by others, but the price for what comes easily, and not due to merit, is very high and will have to be paid when the time comes. Only what we receive without compromising our independence will nourish our body and spirit.

Now is the time to take care of ourselves, not only in things related to physical nutrition, but also in the cultivation of our character. The stage is set for action, but first we must gather the necessary strength. It is most important that we achieve material independence and a strong outlook. We mustn't look with envy at those who enjoy a comfortable situation that is dependent on others. If we take on the penetrating judgment of thunder, we will perceive the high price paid for such dependence. It is not bad to accept help offered in good faith, but only if it doesn't constitute a risk to our freedom. The right kind of help will increase our own strength and make it possible for us to provide nourishment to others.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 28. Excess of the Great

28. EXCESS OF THE GREAT



Lake over Wind

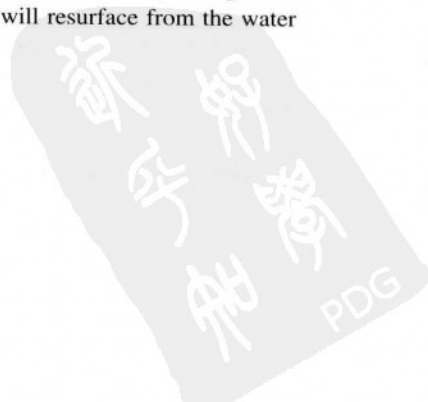
When circumstances are oppressive, small tasks will lead to success.

The sign for wind is also the sign for penetration and for wood. Here, the lake is above wood, flooding the trees. For this reason, it is an extraordinary time. Water is powerful and covers wood, but wind is penetrating, and so wood withstands the water, remaining tranquil until the waters recede.

There are times when circumstances overwhelm our strength and projects we have worked on over time collapse. We conclude that all our efforts have been in vain, and we lose hope. In times of collapse, of flooding, visible things are submerged. But wood has the attribute of penetrating earth, and wind has the attribute of dissolving. Together they can withstand the flooding and rise above the water. At present we cannot aspire to the accomplishment of great deeds, but we must not let circumstances defeat us. The burden we bear is excessive, because the beginnings of our enterprise were not solid. An inadequate beginning will never lead to success.

It is essential to retain serenity and be prepared to fight difficult circumstances. This can be achieved by dedicating our efforts toward accomplishing small tasks, daily obligations, the schedules and habits that will help us to stay focused on reality and away from the jolts and hardships brought on by destiny. At the same time, we must analyze failure, seeking its causes, and consider new beginnings and new goals. Thus, when the waters recede, we can begin the endeavor anew—in the same way that penetrating wood, the tree, will resurface from the water to develop in freedom.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 27. Nourishment



29. WATER, THE PROFOUND



Water over Water

When surrounded by difficulties, adopt the path of least resistance.

Water adapts to all obstacles, filling hollows and overflowing them. Neither the abyss nor the falls can slow its progress. It occupies the most inferior level, but its constancy erodes even powerful mountains and its force is invincible. Nothing can alter its nature, because water accepts without resistance.

Danger may seem a negative situation in life, but sometimes it can strengthen character and sharpen intelligence. When confronted by danger, it is essential to preserve our inner nature, and we can accomplish this only through movement. Water needs only to rise a little to reach the lip of the container that holds it, but this rise is still movement. The constant flow of water constitutes its invincible power. Water conforms to every hollow, moving, falling and filling even the most profound depths. Its adaptation makes it the most powerful element.

Dangers lurk everywhere, and we must skirt them by adapting to the situation and not being stopped. Circumstances are external and, as such, cannot affect our inner nature. It is wise to concentrate all our strength in surmounting the barrier before us, without moving beyond it, and without looking at the enormity of the obstacles that lie ahead. Like water, once we have surmounted the barrier and filled the next hollow, we can continue on our path. Impatience will not achieve success. We must wait for the situation to reach its natural limits before it can be overcome. Finally, it is necessary to find ways to adapt to the situation, taking detours, delaying advances and analyzing the path of least resistance in order to escape danger. This is not the time for undertaking great enterprises; true accomplishment will be achieved only after the danger has been left behind.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 30. Fire, That Which Adheres

30. FIRE, THAT WHICH ADHERES



Fire over Fire

In assessing situations or people, use intelligence tempered with kindness

Fire produces brightness and attaches to the things it burns, assuming their shapes. Hence, fire adapts and illuminates at the same time. It can be the sun or lightning. It is the light that illuminates every corner of the land, and it ascends from the earth. Fire symbolizes transformative nature.

Luminosity is manifested through knowledge, culture, art and spirituality, but this brightness must not exceed its inner nature. Fire adheres to wood, but consumes it. During the time it is burning, fire provides light and heat. Then fire changes its form to embers, which flame up again in new wood. Intelligence has the same relation to life as that of fire to wood. Clarity of judgment is necessary, but it can destroy life if it is too incisive and heartless. We must regard our own errors and those of other people with benevolence in order to enlighten without destroying. If we maintain the burning embers, fire will continue to heat our homes.

It is necessary to analyze the exact position where we now stand, because this analysis will determine our action. Intelligence should illuminate our path, and reflection must precede action. Sometimes obstacles may appear so enormous they obscure our capacity to judge. But during this time of fire above and below, our powers of enlightenment and capacity for comprehension are extraordinary. This is an enormous advantage, but we must use our clarity of judgment with moderation. Employed with excessive zeal, it could paralyze us. Once we have thoroughly examined the situation and reached the proper conclusion, we must act decisively and with energy, persevering until success is attained. Only through perseverance will the flames continue to provide illumination.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 29. Water, The Profound

31. INFLUENCE



Lake over Mountain

When attempting to influence others, first work on your own defects.

Mountain makes a hollow for the lake to lie in. The lake lends its moisture to the mountain, and the forces of lake and mountain complement each other. The forest thrives on the lake's shore because the mountain has made room for the lake.

To exert influence on others, one can employ showy deeds or take heroic measures, but what truly influences others is strength of character and integrity. When one occupies an inferior position, influence derives from modesty. If one is in a superior position, influence derives from the affirmation of one's personality. For influence to have an effect on others we must first clear a space, eliminating or diminishing the defects in our own nature and their outward manifestations in the world. Finally, if we seek to exert influence on other people, our actions must be just and temperate in order to ensure the lasting effects of our influence and allow its continuity as a guide for appropriate action.

If we occupy an inferior position and we want to exert influence, we should not pursue those we wish to influence; we must control ourselves. Nor should we easily succumb to the influence of others. To succeed in either situation, we must work to cultivate our character, rejecting disturbing influences, strengthening our will and maintaining a firmness of purpose. The situation is favorable for us to be united with many different people whom we may follow, or guide, depending on our situation. In either case, we will succeed. This is a time to renounce prejudices or preconceived notions that can impede our advance. The old must disappear, creating a space for the new.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 41. Decrease

32. DURATION



Thunder over Wind

When conditions are adverse, firmness of purpose is the key to success.

Thunder and wind represent movement, which seems opposed to the concept of duration. Carried by the wind, thunder's force resounds over the land, and wind gathers power from the sound of thunder. The actions of the two, their coming and going—the constancy of change—is part of an enduring cycle.

Duration is not a state of inertia or quietude, but is determined by movement, which exists in a constant state of renewal and reinforcement. Being able to perceive duration at the heart of movement will help us to persevere in conditions of adversity. We will encounter obstacles or trying situations, but we must keep to our path, without resting. Duration can exert positive or negative effects. If duration is applied to actions aimed at a worthy goal, the effect is positive. If duration attaches to a state of indecision or to actions resulting in failure, it will debilitate our character and magnify our errors. Only through the assiduous cultivation of our own character will we manage to enjoy the fruits of an enduring and just achievement.

We cannot stop now, because duration precedes success. But we must accept the fact that movement has its own rules and follows its own course, in gradual stages, ending and beginning ceaselessly. We cannot skip steps or be indecisive. Indecision never ends in success. It is preferable to commit to action and err and make corrections than not to act at all. If we have conceived of a specific course of action, even with only a partial vision of the end result, we must act. However, duration in pursuing the wrong course of action will mean stopping to redirect our actions along a new and different course. If, through the power of duration, we can advance, retreat and retrace without losing strength or steadiness of purpose, we will achieve our wish.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 42. Increase

33. RETREAT



Heaven over Mountain

When surrounded by negative people or circumstances, retreat is the only wise option.

The mountain rises toward heaven, which retreats to give it room. Heaven doesn't deny the mountain shelter—because heaven is all-embracing—but it keeps its distance. The time has come for a smiling departure.

Retreat is auspicious, especially if one is surrounded by negative people or circumstances. It is important not to confuse retreat with flight. During retreat, we regroup our forces for the subsequent advance. In flight, the field is abandoned to the enemy. Herein lies the difference between fortitude and weakness. When retreating, we must not stop to look back, a frequently made mistake. During an advance, looking back means only a momentary detention. Looking back during retreat is catastrophic, depriving us of clarity of judgment, because we see the enemy on the verge of overtaking us. The rules of retreat are simple: Say farewell and take our leave.

We must not hesitate because the time of light has passed, heaven is retiring, and obscurity is rising. We have run out of options, and retreat is necessary, because fighting will only dissipate our forces. A partial retreat is not abandonment, but recuperation of strength before the final effort. The most dangerous moment occurs when the time for retreat has arrived and we are held back. People who wish to obtain favors or benefits from us will try to detain us, but our purpose must not allow delays. We must part cordially with them, because now is the time for leaving. Only through the performance of correct action will heaven return some day to take its proper place over the mountain.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 19. Approach

34. POWER IN GREAT MEASURE



Thunder over Heaven

When in possession of great power and strength, only equilibrium will bring success.

The power of thunder exceeds its limits, and the mountain, which has gained strength from the thunder, has almost invaded the sky. We cannot attain so high a peak, but if we tarry too long at the mountain's base, we will become paralyzed. Nature sustains man, but it can also destroy him. It is in our hands to restrain the excesses of the mountain.

Power develops in the interior before manifesting itself. When power has accumulated in great measure, it will produce resistance; only if it is based on justice will it be tolerated. Virtuous conduct and rectitude of behavior will confer power; oppressive authority will take it away. Firm action will also bestow power, but only if it is tempered by equilibrium. If we are persistent, we can maintain our position. If we exceed the limits of what circumstances will allow, power will oppress us. Heaven can only shelter the mountain if it leaves a space for thunder to escape. Thus is its menacing sound eclipsed.

We are full of energy and capable of carrying out great deeds. We possess inner strength and power of decision, which causes us to rush boldly forward to eliminate obstacles, without stopping to analyze the consequences. In thinking we have more than enough energy, we waste it, and, by the time we notice its disappearance, it can be too late. It is not easy to surrender power, because power places us in an advantageous position, and others yield to our will. But we need to know where the limits lie in order to avoid being consumed by our own excessive power. Indecision is not an option, however, because we are in possession of the necessary energy for a great undertaking. If we maintain our equilibrium, we can achieve power and prestige that no one can deprive us of.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 20. Contemplation

35. PROGRESS



Fire over Earth

In seeking new horizons, accept all opportunities to advance.

The sun rises, lit by its internal fire, and the earth shines. In the beginning, patches of earth lie in shadow, but at the sun's zenith, the landscape is resplendent with light.

Clarity of judgment, like the sun that illuminates everything, requires the capacity to recognize the just and to expose the unjust. Sometimes incisive clarity may lead us too close to the negative, the dwelling place of darkness, but to avoid viewing reality in its entirety leads to failure. This is a time of progress. Judgment illuminates the road ahead and facilitates a speedy and successful advance. However, times of progress can also hide the seeds of failure. It may be that we fail to take advantage of this opportune time either because we don't recognize its auspiciousness (especially if it follows a difficult period in our life), or because we harbor the mistaken belief that this period will last indefinitely. Progress follows the path of least resistance, but, like fire, it ends up extinguishing itself. So we must enjoy the splendor while it lasts.

We must leave our immediate surroundings and look for new horizons. We possess the strength of clarity and should not doubt our ability to achieve success. There are many lands to see, many roads to travel, and time is limited. If we don't act now, it is possible that the opportunity will be gone forever. A period will come when we can rest and surround ourselves with comfort, but now is the time to advance. Our baggage must be light because, paradoxically, only a light spirit can provide the strength for a long trip. And we should not linger on the bank of the river to rest, except briefly to restore our strength. Progress may finish its mission with us at any time and disappear over the horizon.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 5. Waiting

36. DARKENING OF THE LIGHT



Earth over Fire

When confronted by powerful negative forces, keep your plans and intentions hidden.

Earth's mass has obscured the sun, but light still shines at the base of the mountain. The light hides hidden treasures, which are revealed only if we remain vigilant, by the mountain's side.

The situation is fraught with dangers, which we can escape only through employing extreme caution and wisdom. Negative forces occupy the dominant position, and opposition will be futile and destructive. The essential distinction between positive and negative forces is that a positive force has its origins in existence; the negative is void of being. This constitutes a paradox: While a positive force will transform all conditions, positive or negative, into something positive, a negative force will strengthen negative conditions, making them more destructive. Antagonism and resistance constitute negative forces. Consequently, the positive must sequester itself from the negative; it needn't disappear, but merely withdraw to recover strength. When the negative force has lost its power, the positive may again advance to shine with its original splendor.

We should take on the luminosity of fire, exercising clarity of judgment to evaluate the situation with accuracy. First, we must uncover the negative forces or people that are trying to destroy us. But we must not reveal our discovery; it is essential that we keep this knowledge secret, continuing with our habitual routines and behavior. Thus the negative won't encounter the resistance it needs to thrive. As soon as possible, however, we must move away from the destructive situation. Acquaintances may think we are exaggerating the danger, because they are unable to see it. But we must not change our course. We must abandon the situation and the struggle against it. Favorable circumstances will return. Having learned from our period spent in darkness, we have to retreat to the sunlight of the mountain top to await the return of propitious circumstances.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 6. Conflict

37. THE FAMILY



Wind over Fire

In seeking to strengthen family ties, temper authority with gentleness.

Wind, manifested as heat, originates in fire. And heat generates power. Wind fans the flames and feeds the embers, and home and family become a refuge from the day's labors.

The family constitutes the foundation of society. What is learned in the family environment will have repercussions at the personal, group and social levels. One of the pillars of the family is the cultivation of the moral character, which schooling cannot replicate or replace. Another pillar is the exercise of authority. If authority is imposed in an arbitrary manner, it will yield results contrary to those desired. If no authority is exercised, the results will be indecision and weakness of character. Setting the proper example is imperative. No order can be carried out that lacks internal coherence and is not dictated by a person with the solid authority to demand its compliance. Equilibrium in the family is essential for ensuring that all members enjoy the fruits of labor.

First we must cultivate the strength and authority necessary to demand the respect that we deserve. But words are vain if they are not based on consistent actions. In a case where the situation is dangerously out of hand, zealous discipline is preferable to laziness or indifference. Duration in this exercise is also necessary, but only until our objective has been reached; then our behavior should become gentle, as the breeze that feeds the embers. We must take care to balance our income and expenses. Family success rests on maintaining the right balance. The children in the family should also learn how to distribute the goods and limit expenditures; this discipline will reinforce family strength and cohesion during times of expansion. When all of these conditions are met, fire will find a permanent place on the hearth, illuminating the home.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 40. Deliverance

38. OPPOSITION



Fire over Lake

When conflicting forces obscure judgment, recover serenity and equilibrium.

Fire over the lake presages conflict. Fire and water never mix, each maintaining its own nature. Only when a cooking fire is used to boil water do the two elements harmonize. Fire over the lake is a disturbing influence, transforming the lake's nature and its color. Only fire, though, can give it back its blue.

It is impossible to accomplish a great deed when forces are in conflict. We can only act on the details, which are also important, because the success of a great enterprise lies in small beginnings. Conflicting forces obscure our knowledge and impede our vision of the final objective. The conflict can be positive if it is a wake-up call to avoid complacency or indifference, but it is negative when it generates confusion. It is essential to identify whether a solution is possible, or whether the situation is rooted in irreconcilable differences. If the latter is the case, we must eliminate the origins of the antagonism. To accomplish this, we will need the help of unbiased and objective people, because the situation is very confused and our forces are insufficient. If we are able to uncover the roots of the conflict, it may yet be possible for the lake to assume its true nature and recover its blue waters.

We must not attempt great deeds at this time. Conflicting forces obscure our intelligence and judgment, causing us to err in making important decisions. Antagonisms should not be allowed to intensify; therefore we should act with gentleness and caution. However, if the conflict is so intense that we are overwhelmed and our judgment clouded, it is necessary to abandon the situation for a time and go away to recover serenity and equilibrium. Then we will be emotionally prepared when the moment for action arrives. It is likely that a person with objectivity will step forward to help us act wisely in the midst of our confusion, but, even so, we should practice restraint. It is of the utmost importance not to allow distress to overwhelm us. If we remain calm, antagonism will follow its own path, far from us, and we will regain serenity.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 39. Obstruction

39. OBSTRUCTION



Water over Mountain

When confronted by major obstacles, keep to your path while cultivating your character.

Storm clouds gathering before the mountain are stopped by its towering mass. The mountain cannot shrink back to let the clouds pass. It stands, solid, unchanging. Only after the clouds release their heavy burden can they reach the sunny slopes.

Obstruction serves a protective function in the human world. It forces man to retreat, saving him from exhausting himself in vain efforts to overcome obstacles that cannot be surmounted at the time. A storm cannot be hurried; it will develop at its own rate, and the rain will fall when the clouds are full. Although obstruction impedes the accomplishment of an immediate goal, it also lends us the strength necessary to eventually achieve that goal. Obstruction may be internal or external. When faced with external obstructions, there is nothing we can do but wait. For internal obstructions, we must work on eliminating defects in our own character. It is easy, when confronted with difficulties, to blame destiny, other people or our situation in life. Instead, we should look within ourselves, examining the possibility that we have contributed to the development of the obstacles. If we are culpable in this way, we may wait forever and never glimpse the sunny slope that lies ahead.

We have two tasks to accomplish: to continue our path while waiting for the external obstacles to disappear, and to advance toward the elimination of our internal defects. We must act decisively to avoid finding ourselves still at the base of the slope when the clouds release their rain. The ascension toward the summit should proceed slowly, but the elimination of our faults must be undertaken quickly to continue advancing with a light spirit. The path will not be straight; we will advance and retreat; we will detour around dangers; or we can rest and wait until the dangerous situation has passed. But we must never lose sight of our goal, the summit. When the clouds have released their burden of rain, the sunny landscape on the other side of the mountain will shine before us in splendid light.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 38. Opposition

40. DELIVERANCE



Thunder over Water

In seeking deliverance from a negative past, never slacken in your efforts to achieve your goal.

Thunder retreats from the world disguised as a mountain. It no longer influences the earth, but only the violet sea. Here, thunder rests from battle, dispersing its forces and contemplating the landscape from on high.

The time of deliverance is experienced as a rapid release of tension. Recriminations and reproaches from the past disappear, and we are free of all negativity. This is not time for self-satisfying victory boasts, however, because there are still many tasks to accomplish. During a time of deliverance there are two critical moments when we can be tempted to abandon the struggle. One is at the beginning, when the undertaking seems overwhelming. The other is at the end, when the goal is in sight, and winning appears so simple that our efforts slacken. Although the first moment may appear the most daunting, the final effort is the most difficult because our forces are almost exhausted. We must never slacken in our struggle toward our final objective. Only through persistence will we find rest on the mountain top above the violet sea.

We need to exert great effort to erase all the negativity from the past and to devote our energy toward advancing into a new period. But we have to be wary of accepting extraordinary aid that is not in accord with our inner nature. If we receive help from those with ulterior or self-interested motives, we will pay dearly for that help in the future. Therefore we must reject it. But if others who are disinterested wish to share the road with us, we must accept them. The deliverance from tension will provide us with the insightful judgment necessary to differentiate between the deceitful and the innocent. Finally, when the goal is in our sight, we must rest for a time to recoup our forces for the final effort. Thus, we can liberate ourselves from the past and calmly contemplate the future.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 37. The Family

41. DECREASE



Mountain over Lake

In a time of personal decrease, seek a safe place where you can act freely.

The lake rests at the base of the mountain, but the mountain overwhelms it, taking moisture to enrich itself. The lake shrinks, growing smaller; then, stealthily, it occupies one of the mountain's hollows.

Decrease in itself is neither good nor bad, depending on where it occurs. If we diminish deficiencies while excesses are allowed to increase, an imbalance will be created that widens the gap between them. But if we decrease what is excessive, equilibrium will result. Disproportionate enjoyment of pleasures, passions that obscure judgment, defects of character and all frivolous and unnecessary things or activities must decrease. However, the effects of decrease may be negative when they deprive us of judgment or freedom. We must be aware of this kind of decrease, which may come disguised as gain. For example, people who want to dominate others may convince them to surrender certain aspects of their lives in exchange for security. The emphasized focus on security will make us forget what we have given up in exchange. Failure to recognize the essential nature of decrease may lead to catastrophe. The example of the lake is to recognize deception and to remain unmoved in the mountain's hollow.

When we are in a dependent situation, one of personal decrease, we may experience indignation, anger or rebelliousness. But for now, the obstacles far exceed our forces, and we must seek a safe place where we can act without interference. We may find this place of safety in the family environment or with friends who share our ideas. We should avoid self-pity and resentment. Even during a time of decrease, we can still help others around us with encouragement or inspiration. Inevitably, once the time of decrease has passed, the waters of the lake can re-ascend to the sky and contemplate the mountain's summit.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 31. Influence

42. INCREASE



Wind over Thunder

When striving toward great success, energy, flexibility and perseverance are needed.

Wind and thunder support and strengthen each other. Wind bears the thunder and gains force by carrying its sound. Wind and thunder travel far and wide together, passing through hollows and crevices in the earth, until it is time to bid each other a joyful farewell.

This is a very auspicious time, but it doesn't last long. In a time of increase, success is assured as long as we seize the opportunity and act with intelligence. Success doesn't offer second opportunities; the time, once passed, will not return. When a correct action in the human world is backed by nature's forces, neither destiny nor chance occurrence can impede the power of increase. We must take care not to boast about our success or try to avoid others, fearing that through sharing our success we may lose it. The time of increase has come to us by virtue of our own merits and therefore cannot be taken away from us.

It is advisable to act with promptness and energy, while remaining receptive and flexible. This is the time for advance and action. Nothing will be impossible for us to accomplish now, because we possess strength and mobility. Paradoxically, the only danger lies in the assurance gained through successes already achieved, which might cause us to diminish our efforts and fall into inertia. We must not rest on our laurels, but persevere while the time of increase lasts. A period of rest for us will come. For now we must learn from the example of the wind, which in its gentleness shares the strength of thunder and effortlessly passes over the mountain.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 32. Duration



43. RESOLUTION



Lake over Heaven

If the time calls for resolute action, exercise judgment and caution.

Lake has almost reached the sky, and only a thin line holds it back. When the lake's waters rise to the heavens to coalesce into storm clouds, torrential rains follow. The rains are beneficial if nature contains them, but harmful if floods follow.

A change of conditions has been brewing over time. Tension that has been present for quite a long time is about to reach its limit and dissolve. This aspect is positive. However, the time is conflictive and full of contradictions, because opposing forces are fighting to exclude and eliminate each other. It is easy to exercise judgment when both parts of a problem are clearly defined. As the lake water surpasses its natural boundaries and overflows, so an irresponsible action can generate chaos, distorting our vision and impeding a successful endeavor. The possibilities for human action will come to an end, and we will have to wait until a change of circumstances allows us a clear vision of the path to follow.

First, we must carefully consider the two opposing choices before us. Then, we must act decisively, but with caution. Even a small mistake, like the final drop that causes the lake to overflow, can carry us far from our objective. Actions should also be guided by correctness. It is probable that we will be criticized by others for proceeding so carefully. We will be urged to turn and confront the difficulty with force or violence, little realizing that a wrong action could destroy everything achieved so far. The time of resolution can lead to enormous achievements. But care is required to locate the place of balance, the exact delineation between heaven and lake.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 23. Disintegration

44. COMING TO MEET



Heaven over Wind

To advance toward your goals, seek union with capable people.

Heaven is in the heights and cannot influence earth directly. So it uses wind, which blows over the land, to disperse its heavenly orders. No place on earth can escape from the wind, so the influence of heaven is felt in every corner.

The time of expansion and movement can carry us very far, depending on those we choose to surround us. This is a period of influence and rapid development when we may gather around us people who can help us, as well as others who can destroy us. The force of the wind is invisible, but it always produces a visible effect. In the same way, a positive or a negative influence may produce a joining or a separation. Man has the freedom to choose one or the other. The wisdom of this time lies in an expeditious movement forward to locate capable people with whom we can achieve the desired goal.

Once the process has started, it can't be halted, which is why it is of the utmost importance to keep negative people from acquiring a position of power. Even if they appear inoffensive or harmless, we must expose them, and for this we will need the help of trusted friends. Our allied forces will produce insightfulness and the capacity for a rapid response. However, we must not mount a full confrontation with the negative, but should find a detour around it, keeping to the course until we find our true way.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 24. Return



45. REUNION



Lake over Earth

If you seek reunion with others, find people who share your vision.

If the lake collects too much water, it will overflow, flooding the land. But if the lake stands at a gathering point for many rivers, the waters will commingle in a meander that flows calmly toward its destiny.

In undertaking a new enterprise it is first essential to obtain the help of like-minded individuals who share our interests. Two choices lie before us: to become the center of reunion or to reunite with others. To become the center, we should possess integrity and inner strength, and we must be able to identify a goal that benefits everybody. If these conditions cannot be met, it is preferable to allow another to take the center and to seek reunion as one among others. We may find ourselves among people who don't share our ideas or vision. In this case we should remove ourselves from the group and seek reunion with others elsewhere. Or we may find ourselves alone and isolated, surrounded by people already reunited. Then we should make an effort to become part of the group. In either case, time is of the essence. After the opportunity for reunion has passed, it will not come again.

We don't lack the elements needed for deciding what to do. But we must take care to comply with the rules attached to our decision. If we want to form the center of a reunion, we must be persuasive, yet stand firmly by our convictions. If we choose to follow others, we must acknowledge their merits and lend aid to the common cause. If we stand at the center, many will flock to us who seek power and influence. They must be ignored in order to assure forward movement. If we follow others, we must not have ulterior motives or hope of gain, and once the goal has been reached, our reward should be commensurate with the efforts we have exerted. Then, like the meandering stream that finds its way through the earth, smooth progress will be ours.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 26. Accumulation of the Great

46. ASCENSION



Earth over Wind

To ascend, be flexible and humble.

Trees grow in the distance. They are unobtrusive, adapting to the wind and bending for obstacles. The trees carry a message: In nature that which adapts will survive.

The time of ascension is favorable, but it has to proceed in accordance with the laws of nature. As the wood in trees adapts, bending with the wind, progress in human enterprises should proceed slowly and with flexibility. It is necessary to work on shaping our will through gradual, firm effort. A continuous small effort will achieve extraordinary results over time. Similarly, a minor defect abandoned to the forces of inertia will assume enormous proportions, blocking progress toward our goal. If we comply with the rules of ascension, our accomplishments will flower, adorning our lives as trees beautify the landscape.

Advance must be undertaken through small, continuous steps. We should adapt to the circumstances and remain flexible in order to overcome unexpected obstacles. Now is the time of ascension, of progress, and we can proceed without fear. We must resist the temptation to let success go to our heads, however. Our power is limited and is not to be wasted on arrogance. The beginning and the end are the most difficult phases of ascension; the first because it requires adaptation and the last because it needs to be accompanied by humility. If both are successfully achieved, we will hear the message of the trees, and we will rest peacefully in their shade.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 25. The Unexpected



47. EXHAUSTION



Lake over Water

When exhausted and unable to act, remain serene and cultivate your character.

When the lake loses its waters, its bed is dry. Nature's cycles require time for the lake to recover. Evaporation sends water skyward to condense into clouds, which catch on the mountain top, unable to pass. When the heavy clouds become too swollen, they will release rain, giving the lake new life.

Adverse times in our lives can either crush our spirits and throw us into despair, or they can serve to increase our inner strength. Everything depends on our attitude as we face these times. Adversities can have their origins in either external or internal causes. External causes are easily identified, and we may blame destiny or wrongs committed against us. These things are beyond our control. Internal causes are more difficult to spot, because they are rooted in failures of judgment or mental transgressions, but such problems can be addressed. Against all logic, we often persist in battling destiny in an attempt to alter the external situation when it is much easier to make changes in our character or outlook. There is wisdom in awaiting the return of propitious circumstances and in preparing ourselves through the cultivation of character.

Paradoxically, this situation is very positive, because it forces us to remain serene, to renew our forces and to exercise perseverance while waiting for our strength to return or for circumstances to change. This is not the time to fight against destiny, but to collaborate with it, because destiny always rewards those who know how to wait with fortitude. If we feel oppressed, we must remain serene until the situation is resolved. If we are exhausted, we must rest. Even if the source of our unease is unknown, serene judgment will illuminate our path. Thus we will recover what was ours, and the clouds, relieved of their burden, will return the lake's lost water.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 22. Adornment

48. THE WELL



Water over Wind

To live a meaningful life, know yourself in depth and share your achievements.

The elements are out of order: water above and wind and wood below. Water can only rise to the surface to sustain man if it is drawn from the well using a wooden pole. Plants also draw water upward to nourish their roots. Thus, wherever there is water there are trees.

The water contained in a well symbolizes the deepest aspirations that confer meaning to our daily lives. Sometimes it is difficult to perceive meaning because we lack the proper balance, inner peace and introspection to recognize it. Meaning lies not at the surface, but in the depths, like water in a well, and it is necessary to draw it into the light. It is inexhaustible and will always ascend to the surface if we succeed in drawing it forth. The acquisition of knowledge is neither tedious nor boring. We discover it through conversing with a variety of people, in gathering with friends and in engaging in pleasant activities that bring joy to the spirit. Knowledge is profound and endless, like water in the well, and, once acquired, will help us to achieve our goals.

What is important is to identify what we really want. Then we should look for the means to achieve it. These two objectives require introspection and careful consideration, but now we possess the wisdom to achieve both. Once the course has been decided, and the means and ends are known, our efforts must be energetic and unstinting. Water can't be drawn up through gentle exertion; our movements must be brisk and strong. And after the water has been drawn, we must share it with others. Thus, our spirits will be light, and we will be free to enjoy success with our chosen companions.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 21. Decision



49. RENEWAL



Lake over Fire

If radical change is needed, take action or lose the opportunity forever.

Lake above extinguishes the fire below. The conflicting forces are positioned to destroy each other. Only if fire is creative and disguises itself as a dragon can it escape.

Radical change requires extraordinary measures, but before undertaking them, we must ask ourselves three questions. First, is what we are about to do really necessary, and have we exhausted the possibility of all other solutions? Second, do we possess the means required to tackle such a change? Finally, do we have a very clear idea of the ultimate goal? In addition, there are rules that will govern the action we take. Correct timing is imperative; hurried action will lead to failure. The means employed to accomplish the goal must be just and understandable. If we want to be leaders, we must earn the confidence of our followers without seeking personal advantage, and we must embark on a course for change only when no other option is at hand. Success will be accomplished by acting in accordance with these principles.

If we have truly decided that radical change is the sole alternative, we must take care not to err, either through haste or hesitation. Now is the time to act calmly and decisively or the opportunity will be lost forever. Due to the urgency of the situation, we must be able to clearly explain the reasons for our decision to those around us, because they may be of service at a critical juncture. We should also attend to small details; this extra care will facilitate our final advance. And we must advance only as far as is absolutely necessary to achieve our objective. Negative things from the past have been eliminated, and we are faced with a new future. This is why we need to be scrupulous in casting aside the heavy weights of old defects and negativities. Only when they are expunged can the dragon be released to fly in freedom.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 4. Youthful Folly

50. THE CALDRON



Fire over Wind

If you want to help others, your personality must shine like fire.

Wind--wood are below the fire, feeding it to keep it burning. When the wood is exhausted, the fire goes out and food cannot be prepared. A caldron sits over the fire to provide sustenance for all. The caldron shines brilliantly in the sun, becoming the center for those who gather around it.

The usefulness of the caldron, like the utility of the well, depends on its accessibility to people. People assuage their thirst by drinking water from the well and satisfy their hunger by eating food prepared in the caldron above the fire. If we possess something very valuable and wish to share it with others, we must first consider the hazards to be faced. If we accidentally overturn the caldron, it cannot provide alimentation. A caldron should never be used without a thorough cleaning; spoiled food residue must be removed before placing new food in it. Further, if a caldron's handles are fragile and it is overburdened with an excessive amount of food, it may break while being carried. But if the handles are made of jade of extraordinary strength and soft luster, the caldron can be safely conveyed, providing bounteous nourishment for those who gather around it. The caldron will then shine as the fire.

If we want to share something of value, we cannot be negligent. We must guard valuable things with care because once they are lost, they can't be recovered. We must take care to tend to details; that which initially appears incidental may turn out to be essential. It is time to get rid of the old to make room for the new, to reverse circumstances, abandoning burdens in order to acquire the necessary agility to take on the task at hand. It is important to employ just the right amount of strength and no more; excessive energy could disintegrate the situation. In the end, an act of creativity will be necessary to transform the caldron's nature so that it serves to nourish both the physical body and the spirit.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 3. Difficulty at the Beginning

51. THUNDER, COMMOTION



Thunder over Thunder

When overwhelmed by an adverse destiny, calmly retreat to familiar ground.

Thunder erupts from the heart of the earth with awesome power. But as the herald of spring, it is a cause for rejoicing. Thunder is manifested in all its splendor by the mountain, which resounds with echoes, and the mountain, in turn, grows more powerful, almost touching the sky.

At first, thunder's sound inspires awe, but its force agitates the mind, facilitating a spiritual transformation. There are three kinds of commotion: heaven's, which is thunder; destiny's; and the one caused by our heart or emotions. In this case, commotion's origin is destiny, and it unsettles our circumstances and shatters our internal forces, causing us to lose serenity. Adverse destiny continues unabated, giving us no time to recover our peace of mind. We may grow discouraged or even desperate trying to find a way out of the situation. We fear the unknown, and commotion clouds our judgment. However, destiny protects those who remain serene and use the circumstances of adversity to strengthen their spirit.

It is difficult to face the hard blows of destiny. Our first response is rebellion. This is succeeded by desperation, which erodes our willpower. It is an unequal fight. We must stand back from the whirl of confused emotions stirred up by commotion and retreat to familiar ground in order to recover our forces. We cannot be alone now or risk going to unfamiliar places. After resting, we will be able to continue our path, but for now we have to wait. If, after a period of waiting, destiny continues with its hostile actions, we mustn't confront the situation directly, but instead direct our actions toward salvaging whatever has been devastated. If we take this course, commotion will pass by without destroying us, and, by the time it weakens, we will have arrived at the peak of the mountain. From this apex, the sky will be revealed to us in its potent beauty.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 57. Wind, The Gentle; Wood, The Penetrating

52. MOUNTAIN, QUIETUDE



Mountain over Mountain

When carried away by emotions, use logic and reasoning to restrain them.

Two mountains are united. The mountain is powerful because it represents quietude. If two mountains unite, the force of quietude becomes invincible.

The quietude represented here is the quietude of emotions and character. This is very difficult to achieve, because the heart's thoughts are faster and more unstable than the mind's reasoning. True quietude is not a lack of movement; it is the exercise of reason that allows us to achieve inner quietude and respond to situations in a timely way, according to the circumstances. Sometimes people who possess stronger willpower than ours pull us along their paths. On other occasions, we may deny our body and spirit the solace they crave. We should avoid both of these situations. We may respond to superficiality, believing that easy talk and mingling with others will salve our emotional turmoil, but this will have the contrary effect, making our lives even more tempestuous. If we take the time to contemplate the two mountains side by side, we will discover the quietude that our heart and mind long for.

It is essential to restrain emotions and apply logic to our reasoning. We must take care of the present because the future is uncertain. External circumstances are not as important now; what matters is exercising precise judgment in deciding further action. We should not fall under the influence of others and should avoid agitated or unstable people. This doesn't mean that we have to isolate ourselves. Friends may accompany us as long as they don't distract us from our objectives. Now we are gathering all the energy and quietude needed to sustain us when the time for action arrives.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 58. Lake, The Serene

53. GRADUAL PROGRESS



Wind over Mountain

For a lasting achievement, advance slowly but steadily.

The single tree on the mountain is visible from afar, and its lonely aspect spreads its influence over the land. The tree has grown slowly, sinking deep roots, which gives it great power. People in the valley below look up to the tree and carry its image in their hearts.

Growth is achieved gradually: The strength and quietude of the mountain unites with the gentle penetration of wood. This gentleness is able to overcome all resistance. In the human world, men must first work on strengthening their character in order to change their situation. The inherent danger in the situation is that the slow evolution of character will not be appreciated due to its barely perceptible advance. But perseverance is stronger than destiny and will be rewarded with achievements sought through the proper means. Our advance proceeds unevenly, sometimes fast and sometimes slow. During a slow period, we must not lose patience and try to force matters, but allow the situation to evolve at its own pace. In the end, firmness and flexibility will create the image that others will contemplate with joy.

We must pass through several stages. First, we must strengthen our character through willpower. The initial stages are the most difficult. People who don't understand our development will try to restrain our progress. We must not let them influence us. We should exercise caution, but, at the same time, remain flexible, adapting ourselves to the changing circumstances. Those circumstances will show us the way. When we arrive at a time of rest, we must share our achievements with others. Then, the eternal beauty of the lonely tree on the mountain will shine for all of us.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 54. The Marrying Maiden

54. THE MARRYING MAIDEN



Thunder over Lake

When entering into a union with others, be sure to preserve your inner nature.

The lake takes on color and intensity from the power of thunder. Thunder gains serenity from the lake and lingers between the mountains before pushing its resounding echoes over the valleys. Energy and strength are in opposition to serenity and equilibrium, but both powers are at rest.

In the union between a man and a woman certain principles must be met to achieve enduring intimacy. The union must be based on equality and respect. There are different kinds of unions: one based on a shared affinity of ideas or feelings, and one that is formed to achieve a certain goal. Whichever kind of union is sought, the people involved must never renounce their freedom or inner nature in the name of forming the alliance. It is possible that sometimes during our lives we form close associations with people whose natures are very different from ours. Only when such a union enriches us emotionally and intellectually can our forces complement each other to achieve success.

It is important to analyze what we really want and to follow only people whom we respect and whose objectives we consider worthy. If these criteria are not met, we must distance ourselves from them, even if we are criticized for isolating ourselves. Most important is the preservation of our inner nature. If we are not in a position to become the focus of a union, we must unite with others, directing our combined efforts toward a good cause. In life there are only two options: accept what happens to us or change it. We can choose the thunder's power or the lake's serenity, but only in accordance with the present situation. In this way we will achieve equilibrium, and thunder's echoes will be pacified by the serenity of the lake.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 53. Gradual Progress

55. ABUNDANCE



Thunder over Fire

If you know the seed, the origin, you can create your own destiny.

Thunder is movement, and fire clarity. For the moment, fire rests in the mountain, but at any time it can emerge to cause destruction. The power of thunder and the burning energy of fire will achieve equilibrium, which makes them invincible.

A period of abundance need not necessarily end, because man, through effort, can maintain it indefinitely. However, a time of continued favorable circumstances may lead to a relaxed attitude, a diminishing of effort and excessive optimism that will allow the situation to degrade according to its inherent contradictions. This will cause destruction. Similarly, the man who has obtained great power and doesn't use it with justice and magnanimity will succumb to the same forces that helped him to ascend to a position of power. This is a time when we must exercise great perspicacity to understand the inner contradictory forces at work and to cultivate the necessary strength to be able to maintain the abundance achieved. Thus, the fire will not be allowed to escape from the mountain.

It is essential to analyze existing circumstances in order to predict the future. If we know what seed has been planted, we will know what fruit will be harvested. The care we take during the growing stage will also determine the outcome of the harvest. This is a time for decisive action, action on a grand scale, since now we have energy enough for large undertakings. We will not be overcome by obstacles, but will surmount them easily. However, we should not be boastful and overly proud of our victories, because success doesn't remain long with those who are arrogant. It is also necessary to maintain a high degree of vigilance for any signs of complacency that may lead to decadence, and to be prepared to redouble our efforts to avert this calamity. Finally, we need not despair over the prospect that abundance is short-lived. We can certainly maintain it forever if we are willing to fight for it.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 59. Dissolution

56. THE WANDERER



Fire over Mountain

To succeed in a foreign land, be respectful and modest.

At times the mountain glows from the fires of farmers burning fields on its slopes. The phenomenon is transitory. Fire can only linger on the mountain as long as there is something to hold it. Then it descends the slopes in search of another peak. The action of fire is unceasing change.

Here we learn the correct attitude to adopt if we want to establish our home in a foreign land. Our position is modest, and we must compensate for this through a show of dignity. It is a common error to make a superficial assessment of the situation and to try to ingratiate oneself through a jocular attitude, but this behavior will be greeted with disdain. The inhabitants of a new land may tease and joke among themselves, but they are unwilling to accept this behavior from strangers. In the same way, a mother understands and accepts her own children's defects, but she won't tolerate others pointing them out or holding them up for ridicule.

Internal dignity must preside over all our actions, because jokes and foolish behavior will not be welcome. Only after we have spent some time in a foreign land and have fully integrated ourselves in the lives and customs there, are we allowed to criticize and make light of things. It is essential that we achieve an in-depth understanding of the new culture and customs and adapt ourselves to the changed circumstances. Modesty and prudence will be indispensable in overcoming resistance. Finally, it doesn't matter what our past achievements have been. Here we are starting from zero, and we will be judged only by our present actions. Fire doesn't possess a form of its own, but adapts to what it holds in its grasp. Thus, through integration, we will be able to find our place and our home.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 60. Limitation

57. WIND, THE GENTLE; WOOD, THE PENETRATING



Wind over Wind

If you wish to change your present circumstances, be gentle and persistent.

Wind follows wind, ceaseless and gentle. So it is with wood, emerging from the earth in the form of trees. Invisible wind stirs the waters, melts the ice and whispers through the trees of the forest. Such is its power.

Gradual efforts, if they are constant, achieve success more frequently than more forceful or violent actions. Determining an objective is important. Wind gusting in several directions lacks strength, but if it gathers together, directing its forces in a single direction, it will be unstoppable. It is difficult to maintain concentration during a time of intense movement, but the persistence and gentle penetration of wind will help to reveal that which is hidden, sharpening our judgment. However, as wind facilitates our easy movement, so also negative people will use the wind's attributes to gain the same access, and our achievements will be disrupted. We must call upon the clarity of our judgment and the energy of our actions to eliminate negative influences. Movement can be for or against us. Everything depends on our actions.

The correct action depends on the nature of the obstacle. To effect a gradual change in circumstances, our movements should be gentle and constant. If an obstacle is complex or difficult, we must use the tools of penetration and adaptation. But if the obstacle is insurmountable, and we lack the strength to overcome it, we have to circumvent it, thus preserving our forces and avoiding the vortex of destruction. If we successfully employ wood's penetration, we will gain insights into the situation and the secrets that surround it. Finally, we must not lose sight of the final objective. Once a decision is reached, we should not succumb to paralyzing doubt. If we focus all our efforts in the same direction, then we can become like the wind. Nothing can stop the passage of the wind blowing freely in the forest.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 51. Thunder, Commotion

58. LAKE, THE SERENE



Lake over Lake

To overcome negative influences, cultivate serenity and inner joy.

The lake lies serene, but evaporation can send its waters to the heavens. Two lakes united retain their water, and waves of blue caress their shores.

Nothing is more powerful than joy and serenity. Fear can also be powerful, but its use produces short-term results, and due to fear's inherent contradictions and forced nature, it will eventually destroy those who seek to use it to control others. Joy carries no internal contradictions. It is always positive, and its presence makes it possible to achieve success effortlessly. The danger lies in weakness brought on by the apparent serenity of the circumstances. Therefore, exterior gentleness must be balanced by internal firmness and strength. We may find that during a time of ease, others will seek to attach themselves to us, sharing our achievements undeservedly. We must be alert to this danger and remove ourselves from such people and their influences. Only perseverance can help us to overcome the situation. And that requires effort.

First, it is necessary to cultivate inner joy. A state of inner joy is much more profound than mere entertainment or diversion, and through it, we can better control our destiny. However, the simple fact of possessing a joyful and carefree disposition won't protect us from negativity. Sometimes an open disposition is vulnerable to both positive and negative influences. We must guard against negative influences, because they can distract us from our objective and, eventually, destroy what we have undertaken. Because this is a time of gentle and serene action, we should avoid the company of people with strong and dominant characters. Their corrosive influence and descendent forces will affect our energy and rob us of our serenity. It is necessary to follow the path of least resistance in order to reach the resting place on the lake's shore.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 52. Mountain, Quietude

59. DISSOLUTION



Wind over Water

When suffering from isolation, eliminate rigidity and severe judgment.

During winter, the waters freeze, forming ice. Snow deepens on the mountains. When the gentle breezes of spring arrive, the ice melts and snow runs down the mountain to replenish the lake. Both call to each other and smile.

When vital energy accumulates in man in the form of self-contained violence, it can only be dissolved by gentleness. But we cannot project gentleness without first dissolving the internal and external obstacles opposed to it. Rigidity and egoism isolate us. We might think that creating an exterior shell will protect us from suffering, but such a shell hardens the heart and moves us farther away from our objective. Sometimes we may exercise severe judgment both on ourselves and others. This results in misanthropy and ill temper. Judging must spring from moderation and justness and never from hatred. If we use the wind's gentleness to eliminate the character traits and situations that isolate us from others, we will surmount all obstacles.

This is a time of elimination and dissolution. We must throw away the negative in order to begin a period of plenitude, renouncing the old to make way for the new. It is essential to eliminate any internal barriers that distance us from others. This requires effort because the shells we construct can be very resistant. Rigidity does not protect us from suffering. On the contrary, it brings about suffering. The past takes care of the old, and spring wastes no time in remembering the winter. It is busy germinating the harvest, swelling the flowers of the fields with blossoms and returning the water to the lake where it belongs.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 55. Abundance

60. LIMITATION



Water over Lake

When facing insurmountable obstacles, limit your struggle and take time to rest.

The lake sits in a small hollow in the mountains. If it exceeds its capacity, water will flood the surrounding lands. Therefore it must be contained where it lies. It is possible that the day will come when its waters reach the sky.

Limits appear to prevent our advance, and we view them as negative restrictions. But limits also serve a positive function: They prevent us from struggling against an obstacle that, for now, we can't overcome. Therefore, instead of exhausting our strength in useless battles, we must prepare ourselves to achieve more important objectives. Limitation comes embedded with its own limits. We cannot set limits for others that we are not willing to abide by ourselves. Doing so would set in motion a destructive force that will turn against us. Limitations should be natural, as water which only rises to the top of the container that holds it before flowing over. If we are on the verge of exhaustion, limitation may help us to increase our strength because it allows us to stop and recover our energy. Once conditions become favorable, our forces will be liberated, and no obstacle will impede our success.

It is difficult to understand how to act at this time, because human nature sees limitation in a negative light. But in this case, limitation provides the only access to our objective. We are faced with insurmountable obstacles. Instead of mounting a desperate frontal attack, we must limit our actions and calm our state of mind. Calmness and containment will result in increase. Thus, we will be ready when the situation changes. We should also be prepared to set limits for others, though they should not be severe or rigid. Eventually, we will see the path to achievement, and we will possess the energy necessary to accomplish our goal. Then no doubts will remain. The waters contained in the deep will freely ascend to the sky.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 56. The Wanderer

61. INNER TRUTH



Wind over Lake

If you wish to have a positive influence, follow your deepest convictions.

Only the curl of waves on the lake reveals the wind's existence. Thus is the invisible made visible. The soft play of wind on water and the lake's serene reflection touch the landscape with surreal beauty.

Now it is the time to discover inner truth. No one knows himself completely, and those who engage in self-analysis frequently err, because one tends to judge others more severely than oneself. The only certainty resides in action and its results. We can see the waves on the lake but not the wind, and, similarly, we must observe the actions of others to know their truth. Maintaining inner truth requires that we avoid emotional dependence on others. Such dependence will deprive us of freedom and the clarity of judgment needed to solve the problems we are facing. We cannot live on borrowed truths. If we depend on others for our center of gravity, we will be thrown into constant anxiety. Inner truth is so powerful that even when we are still and unmoving, its influence travels out from us—as sound reverberates far over the waters.

We must adopt the wind's mildness in our attempts to understand others, judging them with benevolence. At the same time, we must bring sharp judgment to bear on understanding the results of our own actions. If we are successful in these efforts, we will accomplish our final goal. It is necessary now to sever the ties of emotional dependence. This doesn't mean that we must remain alone, but we shouldn't be influenced to the point of ignoring our most profound convictions. It is possible that we will encounter difficulties in remaining centered on our goal, and that our actions achieve only small results. But we must not worry. The waves travel ever forward over the blue lake.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 62. Excess of the Small

62. EXCESS OF THE SMALL



Thunder over Mountain

To achieve important future goals, remain in a familiar environment and proceed cautiously.

The power of thunder over the mountains differs from its power over the valleys. In the mountains, the voice of thunder is deafening. Over the valley, it announces the coming rainstorm and the dissolution of tension. In this situation, thunder is at the center of its power, and it must not exceed its limits.

Modesty and meticulous conduct assure success. But they shouldn't be obvious or ostentatious, because even virtue can be an object of attack. People despise conceit and arrogance in others, even when their actions spring from correctness and rectitude. The situation is difficult because we must hide our happiness. There is not enough strength to undertake a major advance; therefore we must remain in the shadows, resting in the valley. Force must give way to weakness, and, for that reason, we must delay action.

We must remain in our own space without attempting to advance more than the situation allows. We can aspire to only small achievements at this time. Our energy should be directed toward the cultivation of character through moderation in conduct, and our external actions should include increasing our savings. To achieve this, we must remain in a familiar environment, surrounded by people who possess strong willpower and who are tied to us by affinity. These people will support us when the time of struggle arrives. We have to display exterior simplicity while we are cultivating inner strength and resistance. Cautiousness is necessary to avoid premature exhaustion and irresponsible actions. The sound of thunder can be frightening, but if we wait until the thunder has moved to the valley, tensions will be released, and we will be able to complete even the most strenuous undertaking.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 61. Inner Truth

63. AFTER SUCCESS



Water over Fire

When advance seems easy and unopposed, know exactly where to stop.

Water poured over fire extinguishes it. Fire heating water can boil it away. But water and fire need not always be antagonists. If fire heats water for man's alimentation, there is mutual benefit. If either goes too far, they exceed their own nature.

In times of general optimism, when everything seems easy, it is necessary to exercise extraordinary caution to make sure that a rising tide of excessive enthusiasm does not deprive us of our reasoning. This period attracts opportunistic people who seek to promote their own benefit. Success is still to come, but it is assured only if the correct rules are followed. It is essential not to rest on your laurels and your past achievements. Steady efforts should be exerted toward achieving the final objective. This is the most difficult hurdle: Once a danger has been overcome, it is easy to stop and look back, rejoicing in our attainments. Although this flatters our vanity, it will prove catastrophic, because complacency weakens our forces and invites the entrance of the enemy. We must halt our advance at the ocean's shores.

We should restrain opportunistic people who, thanks to an optimistic environment, will try to share our successes. We must continue our efforts in the correct measure, without excess and without leaving loose ends. A great and splendid time is about to arrive, but for now we must reign in our enthusiasm, giving it free release when we receive what we are wishing for. Special care must be exerted to maintain an attitude free from false pride. If we congratulate ourselves, rejoicing in the strength we have demonstrated in overcoming all obstacles, we will attract misfortune, because destiny only protects the modest. Similarly, destiny also protects those who know exactly where to stop.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 64. Before Success

64. BEFORE SUCCESS



Fire over Water

To advance, leave the old behind and always maintain hope.

Water cannot extinguish the flames because it lies below the fire. When the forest burns, ash falls to earth, coloring nature gray. But the red of fire is the color of hope. After the rains come, the sun shines brilliantly, and the forest emerges from its coat of ash with renewed splendor.

It is a difficult time. The old has perished, and the new hasn't yet arrived. The brightness of fire prevents us from seeing clearly. Everything seems lost, and we can only find ashes and destruction, the remnants of what we have had to abandon. We must remember that ashes fertilize the soil, and new vegetation will emerge from the earth. Paradoxically, this is a very auspicious time. The moment for transition has arrived, and progress depends only on our willingness to advance. However, danger hides near the finishing line, because when the end is at sight, we can make mistakes more easily due to a distorted sense of proximity. The past must be completely eliminated if we want to achieve our goal. Thus, from the gray ashes, painted red by fire, a new and more beautiful forest will emerge.

We possess the required energy, and we are about to reach our objective. Nothing impedes our advance, and hope is more powerful than destiny. But we must go through the proper steps. The final one is the most important, because our strength could fail us just a few steps short of the goal. It is of paramount importance not to let old demands take over. We have to leave the past behind for the new cycle to begin. With energy, caution and perseverance, we can maintain hope as a reality forever.

Opposite hexagram: Chapter 63. After Success



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Professor Zhang Wenzhi obtained his B.A. as a major of English language and literature from Shandong University in 1990, his M.A. of Yi-ology in 2002 and started his doctorate studies of Yi-ology since 2005. He began his tenure as office director of the Center for Zhouyi & Ancient Chinese Philosophy in 2002 and editor of the academic journal of *Zhouyi Studies*. He specializes in image-numerology and its English translation and has published two books and over thirty academic papers. Dr. Zhang has been an invited lecturer on the subject of Yi Jing in Singapore,

Belgium and Taiwan-District and was a visiting scholar at the Harvard-Yenching Institute in the U.S. from September 2007 to August 2008. He is an executive member of the Chinese Learned Society of Zhouyi. I am deeply indebted to Professor Zhang Wenzhi for his expert assistance in the translation of this book.

I wrote the original manuscript of this book in Spanish. It was a summary of my doctoral dissertation *La esencia de la Naturaleza: Síntesis del pensamiento occidental y chino y su expresión en la pintura de paisaje* (The Essence of Nature: Synthesis of Occidental and Chinese Thought and It's Expression in Landscape Painting). I first translated it into English myself, but the result, a distilled and literal translation, presented difficulties for the translator and general reader. I am, therefore, very grateful to my consultant editor and long-time friend Frances Pettey Davis, for her able assistance in rendering my prose into more accessible English.

Frances P. Davis is an award-winning writer, newspaper columnist and freelance editor whose stories, essays and poems appear in U.S. magazines, anthologies, travel books and print and online journals. She worked tirelessly with me to maintain the exact meaning of the words, while at the same time shaping the text into a more poetic and literary form. During our collaborative process, her insights caused me to rethink some parts of the text so as to achieve even deeper and more precise meanings. Her input and sense of poetic style helped me to distill the final essence of the chapters in the short, yet profound, poems related to the text and the paintings.

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附录：卦象与顺序对照表

APPENDIX: TABLE OF TRIGRAMS AND HEXAGRAMS

上	☰	☳	☵	☴	☶	☷	☲	☱	
下	乾	震	坎	艮	坤	巽	离	兑	
☰	乾	0 1	3 4	0 5	2 6	1 1	0 9	1 4	4 3
☳	震	2 5	5 1	0 3	2 7	2 4	4 2	2 1	1 7
☵	坎	0 6	4 0	2 9	0 4	0 7	5 9	6 4	4 7
☴	艮	3 3	6 2	3 9	5 2	1 5	5 3	5 6	3 1
☶	坤	1 2	1 6	0 8	2 3	0 2	2 0	3 5	4 5
☷	巽	4 4	3 2	4 8	1 8	4 6	5 7	5 0	2 8
☲	离	1 3	5 5	6 3	2 2	3 6	3 7	3 0	4 9
☱	兑	1 0	5 4	6 0	4 1	1 9	6 1	3 8	5 8

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《易经》卦图的喻象思维与西洋绘画的表现主义，是中西文化背景下两种不同的认知路向和表达手段。然《画说易经》的作者独辟蹊径，抓住两者在“取自然之象”和象意结合表达内涵上的相契，将西洋绘画的意境追求、主体感悟，与《易经》的象图、卦辞作对应诠释和互动思考，力图揭示《易经》的智慧结晶和道德意涵，为读者提供关于《易经》的意义理解和审美享受，是中西文化精神心理层面上沟通的一个有益尝试。

——施炎平（华东师范大学教授）

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白特兰博士，一位西方学者，20多年来一直从事研究《易经》，难能可贵，也足以说明《易经》的文化魅力。

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